

Application Reference	DC/083741
Location:	Hatherlow Sunday School Hatherlow Romiley Stockport SK6 3DR
PROPOSAL:	Conversion of an existing disused former Church Hall building to form 11 No. apartments, with associated demolition, external alterations and landscaping
Type Of Application:	Full Application
Registration Date:	17/12/2021
Expiry Date:	25/04/2024
Case Officer:	Rachel Longden
Applicant:	Jason Davy
Agent:	Bernard Taylor Partnership Ltd

UPDATE TO MEMBERS

Members will note in the report below that Werneth Area Committee commented on the issue of a proposed pedestrian crossing which has been approved to be installed on Hatherlow and how this may affect the proposed on street parking resulting from the development.

In response to this concern further clarification has been sought from Highway Engineers. From the submitted parking survey, it was identified that there was space on street in the immediate area for 22 cars, which exceeds the forecasted demand for 11 cars based on car ownership in the area. 22 spaces would provide 2 per apartment.

A new toucan crossing is proposed from the end of Hursteads Lane including zig zags. No waiting at any time restrictions are also proposed along Hursteads Lane and the lower section of Hursteads Lane is proposed to be closed to vehicles so if the scheme were implemented there would be no parking available on Hurstead Lane and on street parking on Hatherlow itself would be consequently reduced. These areas are however outside the area within which the parking survey indicated space for residents of and visitors to the development would be available. The survey initially looked at the streets closest to the proposed development as they would be obviously most convenient to residents.

Cycle store for 11 cycles is required. The proposed site plan indicates store with racking for 11 typical bicycles to the rear of the site, at ground level and is adequate to serve the development. The basement area would provide additional, surplus storage for any non-standard cycles such as lieflats. A condition has been recommended for provision of full details of cycle store.

The proposed scheme is a conversion from an existing use which had no parking, including no disabled provision. However, if scheme were a new build as opposed to a conversion it is likely that we would be looking for disabled parking to be provided.

The improved cycle and pedestrian facilities resulting from the proposed highway works could be considered to increase accessibility of the proposed residential development for non-motorised modes.

DELEGATION/COMMITTEE STATUS

Werneth Area Committee. Application referred to Committee due to receipt of more than 6 letters of objection contrary to the Officer recommendation to grant.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

Full planning permission is sought for the redevelopment of the site of Hatherlow Sunday School, Hatherlow, Romiley, for the conversion of the existing building into 11 apartments. The proposed apartments consist of 7 No. two storey maisonettes and 4 No. single storey apartments (Use Class : C3) with associated demolition, external alterations and landscaping.

The proposal includes the conversion of the main hall and secondary hall into 6 No. 2 storey, 2 bedroom apartments. The former ground floor kitchen and first floor classroom would create a 2 storey, 2 bedroom apartment. The North East wing of the existing building would be converted to 2 No. apartments at ground floor and 2 No. apartments at first floor, all with 1 bedroom.

Externally, the majority of the openings will remain. 4 No. conservation style velux windows would be inserted in the front roof slope. Further conservation style roof lights would be added to the rear facing roof slope and the North Western and South Eastern facing side roof slopes.

A communal garden with benches would be provided to the rear of the property within the courtyard area, accessed via a secure gate.

Cycle storage would be provided within the basement.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site is the former Hatherlow Church Hall and Sunday School. The building is no longer in use. The space within the building is approximately 643 square metres, within a 'U' shaped configuration. The front elevation of the building, the North Western facing side elevation and some rear elements are constructed using stone. The East wing to the rear, which is two storey, along with the rear elevation are constructed of red brick. The roof is pitched and constructed of slate. Windows are metal framed and leaded. The main front section of the building, and the Western wing are single storey. The existing building fills the majority of the site. A rear courtyard area is sited to the rear, between the two rear wings. An area of hardstanding is sited to the front of the property and an access path is sited along the South Eastern side of the property, providing access to the rear courtyard.

The Spread Eagle Public House (Grade II Listed Building) is sited adjacent to the south eastern side of the application site. To the rear and North Western side of the property are residential dwellings. To the front of the site is an area of hardstanding, used as informal car parking, with Hatherlow Road beyond.

POLICY BACKGROUND

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

The Statutory Development Plan for Stockport comprises :-

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

The application site is allocated within a Predominantly Residential Area, as defined on the UDP Proposals Map. The following policies are therefore relevant in consideration of the application :-

Saved UDP policies

- EP1.7 : DEVELOPMENT AND FLOOD RISK
- L1.1 : LAND FOR ACTIVE RECREATION
- L1.2 : CHILDRENS PLAY
- MW1.5 : CONTROL OF WASTE FROM DEVELOPMENT

Core Strategy DPD policies

- CS1 : OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES : SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT - ADDRESSING INEQUALITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGES
- SD-1 : CREATING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES
- SD-3 : DELIVERING THE ENERGY OPPORTUNITIES PLAN – NEW DEVELOPMENT
- 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
- H-2 : HOUSING PHASING
- H-3 : AFFORDABLE HOUSING
- CS8 : SAFEGUARDING AND IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT
- SIE-1 : QUALITY PLACES
- SIE-2 : PROVISION OF RECREATION AND AMENITY OPEN SPACE IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS
- SIE-3 : PROTECTING, SAFEGUARDING AND ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT
- CS9 : TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT
- CS10 : AN EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT NETWORK
- T-1 : TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT
- T-2 : PARKING IN DEVELOPMENTS
- T-3 : SAFETY AND CAPACITY ON THE HIGHWAY NETWORK

Supplementary Planning Guidance and Documents

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

- DESIGN OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SPD
- OPEN SPACE PROVISION AND COMMUTED PAYMENTS SPD
- PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING SPG
- SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SPD
- TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS SPD
- SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION SPD

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF, initially published in March 2012 and subsequently revised and published in December 2023 by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

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

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

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

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

No relevant planning history

NEIGHBOUR'S VIEWS

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

Letters of objection from 20 properties have been received to the application. The main causes for concern are summarised below :-

Impact on Residential Amenity

- Noise from communal garden area and bin storage area
- Overshadowing from any new trees
- Overlooking from rear facing windows
- Light pollution from lights along walkway and within courtyard
- Overlooking and loss of privacy from Western facing side windows.
- Noise and disturbance from the number of flats.

Conservation Issues/Visual Amenity

- Potential impact on adjacent Listed Building

- Historical aspect of the façade will disappear and destroy atmosphere of conservation area

Parking

- Insufficient parking provision – already issues on a weekend
- Red line plan excludes any land outside of site boundary, excluding land used for informal parking. No land within the application site is designated for parking
- Frontage land is outside applicants ownership and ownership is unknown. There are competing rights for parking facilities on frontage land outside the site and this should not be asserted for use to meet parking needs of the development
- Adjacent public house and nearby business have prescriptive rights to park vehicles on land to the front of the proposed development
- Residents of flats potentially parking on Howard Close resulting in a hazard and issues with emergency vehicles
- Additional vehicles blocking access for nearby residents
- Safety issues from cars parking on main road

Other Matters

- Proximity to public right of way.
- Historic footpaths through the property will be lost
- Noise impact on residential properties from adjacent public house
- Over-development of the site
- Proposed windows do not comply with secure by design standards for natural surveillance
- Loss of use of the hall will damage the local community
- Report states there are no bats – bats have been seen in and around building

CONSULTEE RESPONSES

Highway Engineer

The levels of traffic generated by the proposed development would be less than those potentially generated by historical/current uses of the site and it would therefore be difficult to sustain an objection to the proposed development on the grounds of any severe impact on the highway due to vehicle movements/ highway capacity.

Though objectors have commented on highway safety concerns including reference to numerous collisions in the locality, evidence within the Transport Statement and from TfGM shows little evidence of recorded accidents in the vicinity of the site.

There are public transport links, shopping, schools and leisure facilities within easy walking distance of the site which would be expected to reduce the dependency on private cars for occupants. There are aspirations to provide additional cycle facilities in the area including links to NCN55. Romiley Station includes cycle lockers available for commuters and is within a short cycle distance from the site.

Whilst commenting upon the accessibility of the site and the availability of options for residents beyond the use of private cars, assessment within the TS indicates a likely requirement for parking 11 vehicles for residents of the proposed development. This

assessment is based on car ownership data within the area, from government statistics (Office of National Statistics).

No defined parking provision was proposed other than use of the car park fronting the development site, permissions for which are not it appears within the applicant's control. A re-appraisal of the available on-street car parking capacity in the area was therefore carried out. On street parking surveys were undertaken in the evening and on Sunday (reflecting when local residents are likely to be at home from work and potential impact of pub visitors). The survey demonstrates that there was space within streets surrounding the site to accommodate the anticipated 11 vehicles from the development, or indeed for 22 vehicles based on 2 vehicles per apartment.

Cycle storage indicated at ground level on the revised site plan; full details demonstrating suitable security and weathertightness are required.

Refuse storage is indicated to the rear of the premises. Applicant is required to evidence that sufficient space is available to store and reposition refuse for collection (11 apartments will require 1980 litres paper card & cartons; 1980 litres paper cans glass & plastics; 1540 litres residual waste and 253 litres food waste). Full details to be submitted as a requirement to be secured by condition. Bin collection point indicated is not immediately accessible from the highway and involves negotiating a step. Particularly a problem if larger refuse storage containers are used. Some form of ramped access would seem appropriate. It may be the case that level access is a requirement from building control.

RECOMMENDATION - No objection subject to conditions

Conservation Team

Hatherlow Sunday School is located within the Hatherlow Conservation Area and adjacent to the Spread Eagle Public House, a Grade II listed building. For further information on these designated heritage assets, refer to the following links :

[Hatherlow Illustrated Conservation Area Character Appraisal 2012 \(live-iag-static-assets.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com\)](https://live-iag-static-assets.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com)

Stockport Historic Environment Database

The Sunday School building is identified as a key unlisted building within the conservation area. It makes positive contribution to the character and appearance of the street scene and is of historic interest, being built on the site of Hatherlow Chapel following its demolition in 1911.

The existing building is no longer in use and its conversion of the building to a new use offers an opportunity to secure its future preservation. The method of conversion has been the subject of pre-application discussion in order to ensure the interventions required to facilitate the new use minimise any harmful impact upon its original fabric and setting, including that of the adjacent listed building. The submitted scheme reflects those discussions and it is considered that the principle of the proposals are acceptable subject to conditions to ensure a careful approach is taken with matters of architectural detailing, external materials and landscaping in order to ensure the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area is respected. Particular care will be required in the specification of windows and doors to ensure the character of the building is maintained.

GMAAS – (Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service)

The former Sunday School is not a designated heritage asset (neither a nationally or locally listed building), although it does lie within the Hatherlow Conservation Area. The significance of the building, and its contribution to the historic character of the Conservation Area, is set out in a Heritage Statement submitted with the planning application, in line with the guidance of the NPPF paragraph 194.

The Conservation Team at Stockport Council is best placed to comment on the harm of development to the setting of the Hatherlow Conservation Area and any designated heritage assets in the vicinity. However, having checked our records, I am happy that the delivery of the proposal will not threaten any known or suspected below-ground archaeological remains. As such, GMAAS is not seeking any further archaeological investigation in advance of or during the proposed development works.

Public Rights of Way

Further Comments (30/03/2023) – following submission of amended statement

The amended statement addressed my concerns. I have no specific objections

Initial Comments (19/09/22)

Section 2.0 "Existing Site and Highway Conditions" fails to acknowledge the PRow network at all. PRow's are highways, and the fact that one runs along the border of the site is shown on the site plan, but ignored. Please raise this with the developer. This is a common theme with planning applications, possibly a general note should be added that developers should look at PRow as a matter of course.

It should be noted that the Transport Statement fails to mention the Otterspool Rd off carriageway cycle track as a safe link to NCN 55, relying on Strava data to suggest carriageway provision is adequate.

Arboricultural Officer

There is no Conservation area protection within this site or affected by this development.

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

The development of the site predominantly sits within the existing footprint and informal grounds and the proposed new development would not have an impact on trees and hedges on site with a few small specimen/ low amenity trees/shrubs on site and not shown on the proposed plans. A full tree survey has not been supplied as part of the planning application to show the condition and amenity levels of the existing trees and where applicable which trees could be retained to increase the amenity levels of the site, but due to the low level of trees and shrubs on site its accepted as not required.

The proposed development will not impact on trees/shrubs on site, for this reason a full tree survey is not required but a detailed landscaping scheme showing the site at the end of the proposed works.

The application states no trees will be removed or impacted on during the construction of the new development.

There is also no proposed landscaping scheme submitted as part of the scheme but this can be conditioned. Further to this they need to commit on the Councils requirement to enhance rather than just replace the tree loss thus improve biodiversity, aesthetics and general screening of the site, therefore a detailed landscaping plan will need to be submitted and approved.

There is a requirement for the tree planting to be improved as part of the scheme to be detailed within a landscaping plan and this should include a level of biodiversity and fruit species to improve access to free fruit as well as an interest in the species proposed.

In principle the design will potentially not have a negative impact on the trees on site and within neighbouring properties, therefore it can only be accepted in an arboriculture aspect with increased tree planting on the boundaries of the site with some fruit species considered for biodiversity improvement.

There should be a landscaping plan submitted showing the planting and will need to improve the level of trees screening the development as well as utilising all opportunities for new trees on site with appropriate species and locations throughout the site for biodiversity improvements.

Conditions recommended.

Nature Development Officer

The site is located on Hatherlow in Romiley, adjacent to the Spread Eagle Pub. The application is for conversion of an existing disused former Church Hall building to form 11 no. apartments, with associated demolition, external alterations and landscaping.

Please note that these comments update those previously issued on 06 October 2022 following submission of additional bat survey information.

The site has no nature conservation designations, legal or otherwise.

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

Legally Protected Species

Many buildings have the potential to support roosting bats. The site is located near to good bat foraging habitat and bat records exist in the local area, which increases the likelihood that a bat roost will be present. All species of bats and their roosts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. The latter implements the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora. Bats are included in Schedule 2 of the Regulations as 'European Protected Species of animals' (EPS).

Under the Regulations it is an offence to:

- 1) Deliberately capture or kill a wild EPS
- 2) Deliberately disturb a wild EPS in such a way that significantly affects:
 - a) the ability of a significant group to survive, breed, rear or nurture young.
 - b) the local distribution of that species.

3) Damage or destroy a breeding place or resting site of such an animal

Buildings also have the potential to support nesting birds. All breeding birds and their nests are legally protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

An ecology survey has been carried out and submitted with the application (LM Ecology, March 2022). A bat inspection survey was undertaken in February 2022 by a suitably qualified ecologist. No signs of bats were observed but numerous potential roosting features were noted externally – including gaps under slates, ridge tiles, lead flashing, under eaves and between masonry joints. The report states that no internal access into the roof voids was possible. The report concludes that the building is considered to offer moderate bat roosting potential.

Further survey work in the form of emergence surveys were subsequently carried out, in accordance with Bat Conservation Trust best practice survey guidelines. Two dusk emergence surveys were undertaken in June and July 2022 (Collington Winter Environmental, July 2022). Foraging and commuting activity from common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats was recorded during the surveys but no bats were observed roosting within the building. It was not possible to fully observe the northern elevation of the building during the survey due to access and visibility issues, however the bat activity recorded did not indicate any likely roost emergence from this area. An inspection survey was also carried out in February 2023 (Collington Winter Environmental, February 2023). No evidence of roosting bats was observed within the roof voids. No potential access points were noted and the roof void did not offer any potential features that could be used by crevice-dwelling bats (e.g. pipistrelles).

Recommendations:

There is considered to be sufficient ecological information available to inform determination of the application. The building was assessed as offering moderate bat roosting potential but no evidence of roosting bats was recorded during the surveys and so the proposals are considered to be of low risk to roosting bats. The precautionary working measures outlined in section 4.1 of the February 2023 Collington Winter Environmental Bat Internal Inspection Report are appropriate to further reduce the potential risk to roosting bats and implementation of these measures should be secured by condition.

An informative should be attached to any planning consent granted so that the applicant is aware that bats (and other protected species) can regularly switch roost sites and sometimes be found in unexpected places. 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 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.

In relation to nesting birds, the following condition should be used: No demolition or tree/hedgerow/vegetation clearance works should take place between 1st March and 31st August inclusive, unless a competent ecologist (or otherwise suitably qualified person) has undertaken a careful, detailed check of buildings and vegetation for active birds' nests immediately before (no more than 48 hours before) such works commence and confirmed 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).

Any proposed lighting should be sensitively designed so as to minimise impacts on wildlife associated with light disturbance (following the principles outlined in Bat Conservation Trust guidance: http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats_and_lighting.html). An informative can be used to this effect.

Biodiversity enhancements are expected as part of developments in line with local (paragraph 3.345 of the LDF) and national planning policy (NPPF). This should include provision of bat and bird roosting and nesting facilities. Integrated boxes are available and these are preferred as they are long-lasting and less likely to be interfered with, but if externally mounted boxes are used, these should be woodstone/woodcrete (or other suitable alternative). A minimum of four bat/bird boxes should be provided. Landscape planting should be maximised and comprise a range of wildlife-friendly species (locally native where possible). These measures can be secured by condition and would be particularly welcomed given the designation of the site as an opportunity area within the LNRS for Greater Manchester.

Environmental Health Officer (Land Contamination)

The proposed development site has not been identified as potentially contaminated, it will involve minimal breaking of ground and demolition of a small building, as such it would be too onerous to request a site investigation. I would recommend the con2 informative for the decision notice should they suspect or find any contamination.

Crime Prevention/Design for Security

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above application, having looked at the proposed development, we would support the application subject to the recommendations within section seven being addressed and recommend that the physical security measures within Section nine of the Crime Impact Statement are conditioned.

Drainage Engineer/Lead Local Flood Authority

Having reviewed the documentation for this application, I would like to raise the following comments.

- The applicant has not provided a drawing of the proposed surface water drainage strategy. We would require to see this, especially at the detailed design stage.
- Infiltration has been discounted based on BGS data. This is assumptive information, and we would require to see infiltration testing to BRE365 conditions before it can be adequately ruled out.
- According to our records, the closest culvert to the site is the Waterside culvert, and is approximately 78 metres away. We require the applicant to investigate whether it is feasible to use this as a potential surface water outfall connection.
- The site's existing and proposed surface water flow rates have not been provided. Therefore, it cannot be determined whether 50% betterment or the greenfield run off rate (5l/s) is being proposed. For a brownfield site, 50% betterment is the minimum requirement, unless in the case that the greenfield run off rate is achieved.

ANALYSIS

Policy Principle

The application site is allocated within a Predominantly Residential Area, as defined on the UPD Proposals Map.

Core Strategy DPD policy CS4 directs new housing towards three spatial priority areas (The Town Centre, District and Large Local Centres and, finally, other accessible locations). This policy sets out a hierarchy for development of urban greenfield sites and firstly seeks to release accessible sites not designated as open space and secondly, the use of private residential gardens in accessible urban locations where proposals respond to the character of the area and maintain good standards of amenity and privacy for the occupants of existing housing.

Core Strategy DPD policy H-2 states that the delivery and supply of new housing will be monitored and managed to ensure that provision is in line with the local trajectory, the local previously developed land target is being applied and a continuous 5 year deliverable supply of housing is maintained and notes that the local previously developed land target is 90%.

The NPPF puts additional emphasis upon the government's objective to significantly boost the supply of housing, rather than simply having land allocated for housing development. Stockport is currently in a position of housing under-supply, with 3.78 years of supply against the minimum requirement of 5 years + 20%, as set out in paragraph 74 of the NPPF. In situations of housing under-supply, Core Strategy DPD policy CS4 allows Core Strategy DPD policy H-2 to come into effect, bringing housing developments on sites which meet the Councils reduced accessibility criteria. Having regard to the continued position of housing under-supply within the Borough, the current minimum accessibility score is set at 'zero'.

The application site is considered to be in an accessible location, having regard to services and public transport. As such, the proposed is considered to be compliant with policies CS2 and CS4 of the Core Strategy.

In view of the above factors, the principle of residential development at a site within a Predominantly Residential Area, in an accessible and sustainable location, is considered acceptable during the current period of housing under-supply within the Borough. On this basis, the proposal is considered to comply with Core Strategy DPD policies CS2, CS4 and H-2.

Design, Siting and Impact on Visual Amenity

Hatherlow Sunday School is located within the Hatherlow Conservation Area. It is also sited adjacent to the Spread Eagle Public House, which is a Grade II Listed Building. The existing building is identified as a key unlisted building with the Conservation Area. The building makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the street scene and is of historic interest, being built on the site of Hatherlow Chapel, following its demolition in 1911.

The existing building is no longer in use and the conversion of the building to a new use, offers an opportunity to secure its future preservation. It is considered that the method of conversion of the existing building would minimise any harmful impact on the original fabric of the existing building and its setting, including that of the adjacent listed building.

The proposal would involve the installation of rooflights within the existing roof slopes of the building to the front, sides and rear. These would be of a conservation style in order to minimise any visual impact. The conservation officer has raised no objection to the proposal and has stated that the proposal is in line with advice given by the conservation team with regard to the conversion of the building. Conditions have been recommended with regard to the specific design and materials of any replacement doors, windows and rainwater goods and any other external alterations to the property. This will ensure that the development would not result in harm to the character of the building, that the character is maintained and that there is no harm to the overall street scene. Conditions will also be imposed with regard to any hard and soft landscaping to ensure that this is appropriate and sympathetic to the existing building.

In view of the above, it is considered that the quantum, density, siting and design of the proposed development could be accommodated on the site without causing undue harm to the visual amenity of the area, character of the Hatherlow Conservation Area within which the site is located and the setting of the adjacent Listed Building. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with Core Strategy DPD policies H-1 and SIE-1 and the Design of Residential Development SPD.

Impact on Residential Amenity

Core Strategy policy H1 confirms that good standards of amenity and privacy should be provided for the occupants of new and existing housing. Additionally, policy SIE-1 states that satisfactory levels amenity and privacy should be maintained for future and existing residents. The NPPF also confirms that development should create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. The consideration of amenity extends to future occupiers of the development as well as occupiers of the existing neighbouring properties.

The site is located within a predominantly residential area. There are residential properties to the rear and North Western side of the application site. As the proposal is to provide a residential use of the property, it is considered that this would be appropriate for this site and would not be at odds with the predominant use and character of the area.

In terms of the relationship of the proposed development to neighbouring properties, the proximity of the rear and North Western sensitive elevations to the adjacent properties is noted. Following officer concern with regard to potential overlooking and loss of privacy to neighbouring properties, along with concern with regard to the living conditions of future residential development, amendments to the proposal have been undertaken. Windows on the rear and both side elevations would be obscure glazed in order to protect the privacy of adjacent residential properties and future occupiers of the site. To the front of the property, adequate separation distances exist to residential properties to the South Western side of Hatherlow. On this basis, it is considered that the proposed development could be accommodated on the site without causing undue harm to the residential amenity of surrounding properties, by reason of overshadowing, over-dominance, visual intrusion, loss of outlook, overlooking or loss of privacy. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with Core Strategy DPD policies SIE-1 and H-1 and the Design of Residential Development SPD.

Objections to the proposal on the ground of overdevelopment of the site are acknowledged. The NPPF (Para 129) states that planning decisions should avoid homes being built at low densities and should ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of sites.

Private amenity space would be provided to the rear of the property, by way of a communal space within the courtyard area. The amenity space would be a useable, rectangular shape. However, it is noted that the amount of private amenity space falls below the guidance set out within The Design of Residential Development. Whilst the amount of amenity space does fall short of the guidance, it is considered that the amount of space would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of providing additional housing within the Borough at a time of housing under-supply.

With regard to noise, comments relating to the numbers of flats generating disturbance and also noise from the communal garden are acknowledged. It is accepted that, given the proposed residents will be active, there will be a level of noise and disturbance created by the occupants as they go about their daily business, to and from and within the site. However, it is not considered that the proposed apartments would result in neighbouring land users experiencing a reduction in the level of amenity they can reasonably expect to enjoy, by virtue of them being exposed to an unacceptable increase in levels of noise and disturbance.

With regard to the proximity of the development to the adjacent public house, it is noted that the main access to the site is to the South East of the public house, and the beer garden is to the front of the site, and therefore screened from the proposed development. Notwithstanding this, as the site is within a predominantly residential area, it is considered that the use of the premises for residential development is wholly appropriate for this location. It is considered that the proximity to the public house is unlikely to result in such significant impacts on noise so as to warrant refusal of the proposal.

Highways Considerations

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

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

The application site is considered to be in an accessible location having regard to its proximity to public transport links, shopping, schools and leisure facilities within easy walking distance of the site. This would therefore be expected to reduce the dependency on private cars for occupants. In addition to this, there are aspirations to provide additional cycle facilities in the area, including links to NCN55. Romiley station includes cycle lockers available for commuters and is within a short cycle distance from the site. In view of this, the proposal is considered to be compliant with policy CS9.

Having regard to the former and lawful use of the site as a Sunday School and community hall, it is considered that traffic levels associated with the proposed development would be less than those potentially generated by historic use of the site and which could take place should the hall reopen. As such, it is considered that there would not be a severe impact on the highway due to vehicle movements/highway capacity. Though objectors have commented on highway safety concerns including reference to numerous collisions in the locality, evidence within the Transport Statement and from TfGM shows little evidence of recorded accidents in the vicinity of the site.

Assessment within the Transport Statement indicates a likely requirement for parking 11 vehicles for residents of the proposed development. This assessment is based on car ownership data within the area, from government statistics (Office of National Statistics).

It is noted that the proposed development does not include any specific provision for parking within the site. A revised parking survey was undertaken, following initial concern from the highway engineer with regard to the use of the car park fronting the development site. However, it would appear that permissions for this are not within the applicant's control. The updated parking survey was undertaken in the evening and on Sunday (reflecting when local residents are likely to be at home from work and potential impact of pub visitors). The survey demonstrates that there was space within streets surrounding the site to accommodate the anticipated 11 vehicles from the development, or indeed for 22 vehicles based on 2 vehicles per apartment. As such, in the absence of objections from the highway engineer, that adequate on street parking exists outside of the application site.

Objections raising concern with regard to rights over the parking area to the front of the property are acknowledged. However, members are advised that such private ownership or access rights are not material planning considerations. It is also noted that the highway engineer raises no objections to the proposal on parking grounds, considering that appropriate parking exists on street outside of the site.

Cycle parking is proposed within the basement of the development, along with additional cycle storage at ground level to the rear of the site. This is considered to be acceptable, subject to full details demonstrating suitable security and weathertightness, which can be secured by an appropriately worded condition.

Refuse storage is indicated to the rear of the premises. Subject to details relating to evidence of space available to store and reposition the refuse for collection, which can be secured by condition, refuse facilities are considered to be acceptable.

In view of the above, in the absence of objections from the Highway Engineer and subject to conditional control, the proposal is considered acceptable from a traffic generation, access, parking and highway safety perspective. On this basis, the proposal is considered to comply with Core Strategy DPD policies SD-6, SIE-1, SIE-3, CS9, T-1, T-2 and T-3, the Transport and Highways in Residential Areas SPD and the Sustainable Transport SPD.

Impact on Protected Species and Ecology

An Ecology Survey, along with a bat inspection survey and a further bat emergence survey, were carried out and submitted in support of the application. The Nature Development Officer has considered that there is sufficient ecological information

submitted to inform determination of the application. The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Nature Development Officer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above. The Nature Development Officer confirms that the site has no nature conservation designations, legal or otherwise.

Foraging and commuting activity from bats was recorded during the surveys but no bats were observed roosting within the building. The Nature Development Officer has confirmed that the proposals are considered to be of low risk to roosting bats. Furthermore, precautionary working measures outlined within the inspection report are considered appropriate to further reduce the potential risk should any roosting bats be discovered during construction, and implementation of these measures will be secured by an appropriately worded condition. Additionally, an informative would be attached to the decision notice highlighting the need to abide by protected species legislation if any are found on site during construction. Further conditions would also be imposed relating to clearance works in order to protect nesting birds, and design of any external lighting in order to minimise impacts on wildlife associated with light disturbance.

Biodiversity enhancements are expected as part of developments in line with local and national planning policy (NPPF). A condition is recommended by the Nature Development Officer to require submission, approval and implementation of biodiversity enhancements and measurable gains within the development. This should include provision of bat and bird roosting and nesting facilities. Landscape planting should be maximised and comprise a range of wildlife-friendly species (locally native where possible). These measures can be secured by condition and would be particularly welcomed given the designation of the site as an opportunity area within the LNRS for Greater Manchester.

In view of the above, on the basis of the submitted information, in the absence of objections from the Nature Development Officer and subject to conditional control, the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its impact on protected species, biodiversity and the ecological interest of the site, in accordance with Core Strategy DPD policies CS8 and SIE-3.

Land Contamination

The detailed comments received to the proposal from the Council Environmental Health Officer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above.

The Environmental Health Officer notes that the site has not been identified as potentially contaminated. However, the proposal will involve limited breaking of ground and demolition of a small building. Therefore, the applicant/developer would need to keep a watching brief for any unexpected contamination and will therefore be advised of relevant procedures should contamination be discovered when carrying out the development by way of informative. On this basis, it is considered that the proposed development would not be at risk from land contamination, in accordance with Core Strategy DPD policies CS8 and SIE-3.

Flood Risk and Drainage

The application site is located within Flood Zone 1, which is deemed to have the lowest risk of flooding. Core Strategy DPD policy SIE-3 states that all development will be expected to comply with the approach set out in national policy, with areas of hard-standing or other surfaces, should be of a permeable construction or drain to an alternative form of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). Core Strategy DPD policy

SD-6 requires a 50% reduction in existing surface water runoff and incorporation of SuDS to manage the run-off water from the site through the incorporation of permeable surfaces and SuDS.

A Foul and Surface Water Drainage Assessment has been submitted in support of the application and the detailed comments received to the application from the Council Drainage Engineer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above. The Drainage Engineer has requested the submission of additional and amended information in respect of the submitted drainage scheme, which could be secured by the imposition of a suitably worded planning condition. This would require the submission, approval, implementation, management and maintenance of a detailed surface water drainage system for the development, which should incorporate SuDS, based on the hierarchy of drainage options identified by National Planning Practice Guidance and taking into account ground conditions. Subject to compliance with such a condition, it is considered that the proposed development could be drained in a sustainable and appropriate manner without the risk of flooding elsewhere, in accordance with saved UDP policy EP1.7 and Core Strategy DPD policies SD-6 and SIE-3.

Energy Efficiency

An Energy Statement has been submitted in support of the application, to confirm that energy efficiency measures would be incorporated within the fabric of the building, in order to comply with current Building Regulations. With regard to low and zero carbon technologies, the use of solar photovoltaics, solar thermal hot water, biomass, wind power, ground source heat pumps and air source heat pumps has been discounted on the grounds of technical feasibility and/or financial viability. As such, the submitted Energy Statement is compliant with the requirements of Core Strategy DPD policy SD-3.

Developer Contributions

In accordance with saved UDP policy L1.2, Core Strategy DPD policy SIE-2, the Open Space Provision and Commuted Payments SPD and the NPPG, there is a requirement to ensure the provision and maintenance of formal recreation and children's play space and facilities within the Borough to meet the needs of the residents of the development. On the basis of the population capacity of the proposed development, this would require a commuted sum payment of £43,384, which would be secured by way of a Section 106 Agreement.

Other Matters

A letter of objection refers to a public footpath along the East side of the building. However, the footpath is sited to the East side of the adjacent public house and would not be affected by the proposed development.

Submitted with the application is a viability appraisal which argues that the development would not be viable if affordable housing is required. This statement has been reviewed by the Council's appointed surveyor and it is concluded that a case has been made to demonstrate that the development would not be viable if affordable housing is required. Noting that policy H3 allows for the consideration of viability, the proposal accords with this policy position and should not be treated as a departure. Notwithstanding that it is considered that any grant of planning permission should be subject to a S106 that includes a clawback clause to secure a contribution

in this respect should the development prove more profitable than currently envisaged.

A Crime Impact Statement has been submitted to accompany the application. This document has been assessed and subject to recommendations within the statement being addressed and physical security measures being incorporated within the scheme, the statement is considered accepted. The recommended measures can be secured by an appropriately worded condition.

SUMMARY

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

It is considered that the siting, scale, height, density and design of the proposed development could be successfully accommodated on the site without causing undue harm to the character of the street scene, the visual amenity of the area or the amenity of surrounding residential properties.

In the absence of objections from relevant consultees and subject to conditional control, the proposal is considered acceptable with regard to the issues of accessibility, traffic generation, parking and highway safety; impact on trees; impact on protected species and ecology; flood risk and drainage; land contamination; and energy efficiency.

In view of the above, the proposal is considered to comply with relevant saved UDP and Core Strategy DPD policies and relevant SPD's. In considering the planning merits of the proposal against the requirements of the NPPF, the proposal is considered to represent sustainable development. On this basis, notwithstanding the objections raised to the proposal, in accordance with the requirements of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the application is recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant.

Should Members agree the recommendation and resolve to grant planning permission, the decision should be deferred and delegated to the Head of Planning, pending the applicant entering into a Section 106 Agreement to secure the relevant contribution towards open space.

WERNETH AREA COMMITTEE (29th JULY 2024)

The webcast of the meeting can be viewed using the following link –

http://stockport.public-tv.site/mg_bounce.php?mg_a_id=86372&mg_m_id=29529&language=en_GB

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

Members sought clarification with regard to land ownership of the parcel of land to the front of the property which was previously identified for parking.

A member of the public spoke against the proposal.

Members debated the proposal. Discussions centred around the lack of parking provided by the development and fact that on-street parking is proposed, the substandard private amenity space and where cycle parking would be provided. Members highlighted the issue of a proposed puffin crossing to be constructed on Hatherlow and how this may impact on the availability of parking.

Following the debate, Members resolved to refer the application to the Planning and Highways Regulation Committee for a site visit with specific regard to on street parking provision, specifically Howard Close, Overdale Road and Hurstheads, Members also noted to highlight the proposed active travel measures and pedestrian crossing.