

Heatons and Reddish Area Committee

28th October 2024

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Corporate Director (Corporate & Support Services)

ITEM 1 **DC/086406**

SITE ADDRESS Land At South Of Stitch Lane, Heaton Norris, Stockport

PROPOSAL Alteration & conversion of Listed Engine House to form 2 self-contained apartments, erection of Roundhouse to provide an additional 52 self-contained apartments (54 apartments total), provision of access, car parking and landscaping and re-location of existing electricity sub-station.

ITEM 2 **DC/090014**

SITE ADDRESS Land at Grafton Street, Heaton Norris, Stockport

PROPOSAL Full application for residential development (Use Class C3) including all associated work and landscaping.

ITEM 3 **DC/089342**

SITE ADDRESS The Pyramid Kings Valley, Yew Street, Heaton Mersey, Stockport

PROPOSAL Change of use of existing office building to Buffet Restaurant, Banquet Halls and storage with ancillary offices.

INFORMATION

This application needs to be considered against the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998. Under Article 6, the applicants [and those third parties, including local residents, who have made representations] have the right to a fair hearing and to this end the Committee must give full consideration to their comments.

Article 8 and Protocol 1 Article 1 confer(s) a right of respect for a person's home, other land and business assets. In taking account of all material considerations, including Council policy as set out in the Unitary Development Plan, the Head of Development and Control has concluded that some rights conferred by these Articles on the applicant(s)/objectors/residents and other occupiers and owners of nearby land that might be affected may be interfered with but that that interference is in accordance with the law and justified by being in the public interest and on the basis of the planning merits of the development proposal. He believes that any restriction

on these rights posed by approval of the application is proportionate to the wider benefits of approval and that such a decision falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

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ITEM 1

Application Reference	DC/086406
Location:	Land At South Of Stitch Lane Heaton Norris Stockport
PROPOSAL:	Alteration & conversion of Listed Engine House to form 2 self-contained apartments, erection of Roundhouse to provide an additional 52 self-contained apartments (54 apartments total), provision of access, car parking and landscaping and re-location of existing electricity sub-station.
Type Of Application:	Full Application
Registration Date:	28.04.2023
Expiry Date:	Extension of Time agreed
Case Officer:	Jeni Regan
Applicant:	Promised Way Limited
Agent:	Kenyon Planning

DELEGATION/COMMITTEE STATUS

Planning and Highways Regulation Committee – Departure from the Development Plan. Due to viability, there are no contributions proposed to provide future residents with access to new or improved formal recreation or children’s play facilities.

Therefore, the application is referred to Heaton and Reddish Area Committee for comment and recommendation only.

DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

Planning permission is sought for the alteration and conversion of the Grade II Listed Engine House to provide 2 no. self-contained duplex apartments. One apartment would be 3 bedrooms and would be located on the ground and first floors of the main engine house building. The second apartment would be 2 no. bedrooms and would be located on the first floor of the main engine house building and within the attached tower. The main entrance to this apartment would be within the tower and a new spiral staircase is proposed to provide access to the first and second floor accommodation. Elevational alterations are proposed to the Engine House and tower to allow natural light into the new accommodation. The ground floor of the building would also house a secure cycle storage area containing a two tier rack providing 40 cycle parking spaces.

In addition to the conversion of the Listed Engine House, it is proposed to erect a new apartment building to provide a further 52 self-contained units at the site. This would include a mix of 42 no. 2 bedroom apartments and 10 no. one bed apartments. The proposed building named the ‘Roundhouse’ by the architect, would be a circular tower providing accommodation over 8 floors. Six of those floors would be full floors, with the top 2 floors being stepped to provide external private and communal rooftop garden areas. The central area of the block would include a full

height atrium with internal access decks providing the main entrances to the apartments. Due to the significant changes in site levels in this area, the bottom floor of the building would be below the adjacent street level of Stitch Lane. The proposed roundhouse block would be located in the north western corner of the site.

In addition to the apartments, the building would also contain an indoor cycle store for 12 no. bicycles on the Lower Ground Floor along with a storage room and a plant room. A large bin store is provided on the Upper Ground Floor with direct access to Stitch Lane for refuse collection.

Externally, a new vehicular access into the site would be created from Bowerfold Lane. Due to the changes in site levels, a ramp would be created within the site to provide access from the site entrance down to the wider site and car parking area. 29 parking spaces are provided with the development, which includes 5 no. disabled accessible spaces. 11 of these spaces would be served by EV charging facilities, one of which would be a disabled accessible space. Other works include the relocation of the existing substation and the landscaping of the site.

Members should note that permission is also being sought through a twin tracked Listed Building Consent application for the development. This is being considered under reference DC/086407. As this application does not constitute a Departure from the Development Plan, nor have 4 or more objections been received against the application, this is not being presented to Committee for determination.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site comprises a vacant site located to the east of Wellington Road North, to the north of Bowerfold Lane and to the south of Stitch Lane. The site measures 0.25 hectares, is irregular in shape and mainly sits below the level of all these surrounding highways. The western boundary of the site is shared with the west coast mainline railway line. The vacant site has been used in the past as vehicle storage for a local garage / showroom, however this use has now ceased. The main vehicular access to the site is currently to the north from Stitch Lane.

In terms of built form, the site includes the Grade II Listed Engine House, which used to form part of the goods warehouse located on the opposite side of Bowerfold Lane and is now the Safestore storage facility. The London and North Western Railway Company built the Engine House and accumulator tower, together with a goods warehouse in 1877. The Engine House and accumulator tower were designated Grade II listed in 1975. Since this time, the building has not been used and is now in a state of disrepair.

The site also currently has a large advertisement hoarding on the site frontage on Wellington Road North. The site is bounded by a mixture of boundary walls and fencing and has very limited planting or trees, apart from on the site boundaries.

The application site is allocated within the UDP as a Predominantly Residential Area. The site does contain a Listed Building as outlined above, however it is not within a designated Conservation Area nor does it contain any Tree Preservation Orders.

The area around the application site is mixed use with residential uses on Stitch Lane to the north and to the south east on Belmont Way / Church Terrace (across Wellington Road North), commercial uses of the Labour Club to the east and the Safestore facility to the south and the railway line to the west.

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

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

- EP1.7 Development and Flood Risk
- L1.1 Land for Active Recreation
- L1.2 Children’s Play
- MW1.5 Control of Waste from Development

LDF Core Strategy/Development Management policies

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

- CS1 Overarching Principles: Sustainable Development – Addressing Inequalities and Climate Change
- SD-3 Delivering the Energy Opportunities Plans – 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
- T-1 Transport and Development
- T-2 Parking in Development
- T-3 Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network

Supplementary Planning Guidance

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

- Design of Residential Development
- Affordable Housing
- Open Space Provision and Commuted Sum Payments
- Transport & Planning in Residential Area

National Planning Policy Framework

A Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) issued by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on the 19th December 2023 replaced the previous NPPF (originally issued 2012 & revised July 2018, February 2019, July 2021 and September 2023). The NPPF has not altered the fundamental legal requirement under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 that decisions must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations (such as the NPPF) indicate otherwise.

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

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

The relevant paragraphs in this case are as follows:

Introduction - Paras 1, 2

Chapter 2: Achieving Sustainable Development – Paras 7, 8, 11

Chapter 4: Decision-Making – Paras 38, 47

Chapter 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes: 60, 63, 64, 66

Chapter 9: Promoting Sustainable Transport – Paras 114, 115, 116, 117

Chapter 11: Making Effective Use of Land – Paras 123, 124, 128

Chapter 12: Achieving Well-Designed and Beautiful Places – Paras 131, 135, 136, 137, 139

Chapter 14: Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change – Paras 157-164, 175

Chapter 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment – Paras 200 – 209, 214

Para.225 “existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)”.

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.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Reference: J/22929, Type: XHS, Address: Wellington Road North, Stockport.,
Decision: REF, Decision Date: 28-MAY-81, Proposal: D.I.Y Retail Store (Outline)...

Reference: J/69834, Type: ADV, Address: Line Of Former Railway Wellington Road North, Decision: GTD, Decision Date: 17-NOV-98, Proposal: ERECTION OF INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED POSTER PANEL ADVERTISEMENT

Reference: J/71505, Type: ADV, Address: Line Of Former Railway Wellington Road North, Decision: GTD, Decision Date: 16-DEC-98, Proposal: EXTERNALLY ILLUMINATED ULTRAVISION ADVERTISEMENT HOARDING

Reference: DC/071516, Type: ADV, Address: Land At Wellington Rd N Opposite Belmont Way, Heaton Norris, Stockport, SK4 2LP, Decision: REF, Decision Date: 09-JAN-19, Proposal: Replacement of existing internally illuminated 48 sheet advertising display with a new internally illuminated 48 sheet digital advertising display in the same orientation and location

NEIGHBOUR'S VIEWS

The owners/occupiers of 25 surrounding properties were notified in writing of the application. The application was also advertised by way of display of notice on site and in the press, due to the application being a Major Development and Affecting the Setting of a Listed Building.

4 letters of representation have been received in response to the application. Two responses have been received from the residents of 2 neighbouring properties. A representation has then been received from the Stockport Equestrian Access and Bridleways Association. Finally, a combined representation has been received from The Friends of the Trans Pennine Trail and Walk Ride Heatons group.

It should be noted that the comments received below were in response to the original application submission. A re-notification / reconsultation exercise was completed following the submission of amended plans and information on the 2nd May 2023, however no further comments were received in response.

The comments received are summarised below:

Local Residents

Objection:

- Strongly object to the application
- Believe the application if approved will cause substantial issues and adversely impact the residents of Stitch Lane, primarily because of the traffic issues such a large scale development would have on traffic and access.
- Stitch Lane is only wide enough for one vehicle at a time and the junction with Wellington Rd North is already dangerous when turning out onto the main road.
- The narrow lane cannot support such an increase in traffic flow.

Neutral:

In support of developing and of the Engine House, however I have the following concerns in relation to the Roundhouse apartment block as the owner of a neighbouring property.

- The position of apartment windows and balconies will result in a significant loss of privacy as they may look directly into my bedroom - apartments on the Stitch Lane side of the building will overlook my back garden and the back gardens of residents of houses on Wellington Road South resulting in a loss of privacy especially given the height of the tower - how close will the roundhouse be from my house?
- Within the application documents, one plan shows the location of the bin store at the Stitch Lane side of the building and on another plan the same space is detailed as the bike store. I am concerned about the potential smell and increased risk of rats so close to my house. Also, is the bin store big enough for 52 apartments to recycle?
- The plans show a boiler for each apartment but I haven't been able to find information on what type of boilers these will be and I'd like to know more about the green credentials of this development - has any work gone into using renewable energy / heat exchange systems?
- How will the Roundhouse be insulated?
- What provision will be made for the upkeep and maintenance of the green space on the development?
- Are there ways in which this development could actually reduce the CO2 emissions from the A6? Through living walls?
- Do the developers have an obligation to contribute to the community?
- Has a bat survey been carried out? I see bats in the trees at 11 Stitch Lane so there may be bats in the trees on the site
- Have also seen badgers - has a badger survey been carried out?

Stockport Equestrian Access and Bridleways Association (October 22)

- The documentation makes no reference to LTN1/20 or equestrians using this section of Trans Pennine Trail.
- 2m entry provision into the site for sustainable transport users should be 3m as a minimum.
- It is unclear how the safety of equestrians & other users of the Bridleway & TPT will be protected along Bowerfold Road both as part of the building phase and afterwards.
- Bowerfold Road is not wide enough for 2 vehicles to pass safely and certainly isn't wide enough for the machinery to be delivered to the site on articulated lorries.
- The access has never been from Bowerfold Road as the site is considerably lower than the road, it has always been from Stitch Lane and there is more than adequate room on the site next to Stitch Lane to create an access straight onto the A6 (at the point where parking space 16 is noted on the site plan)

The Friends of the Trans Pennine Trail and Walk Ride Heatons Group

- The Trans Pennine Trail is a popular coast to coast multi-user route (in this case National Cycle Network route 55). In this particular location, along Bowerfold Lane, it is designated for walking, cycling AND equestrian use. Locally, this section of the route is well used, as it connects across the very

busy A6 via Toucan and Pegasus crossings, and allows users to avoid other busy routes through Stockport Town Centre.

- Whilst it is good to see plans being brought forward for an area of derelict land in the Heatons, we have some serious concerns about the application, particularly in respect to the access off the A6 and Bowerfold Lane and the provision of the cycle storage.
- Very concerned as to how this development can be constructed safely if access will be via Bowerfold Lane? In our opinion, significant widening and remodelling of the junction will need to be undertaken, with upgraded provision for all three walking/cycling/equestrian modes.
- The proposed development lies considerably below the level of Bowerfold Lane and a relatively steep ramped and curved access road will need to be constructed down from Bowerfold Lane. Looking at the swept paths for larger vehicles provided in Appendix D, movements into and out of the access road will involve crossing over to the wrong side of both Bowerfold Lane and the access road
- Our other serious concern is around the visibility splays exiting from the development onto Bowerfold Lane, as shown in Appendix D. In particular, looking right along the lane, past the tall Engine House, the visibility is very restricted and there is a very high risk of collision, particularly for cyclists coming downhill towards the A6.
- The current 30mph speed limit on Bowerfold Lane must be reduced – given the serious safety concerns we have raised above, we would suggest that a non-standard limit of 15mph would need to be adopted.
- Whilst two blocks of cycle storage spaces are shown on the plans for the apartments, few details are given, other than “100% cycle parking” will be provided. The Council requires one cycle storage space per dwelling, which would mean a total of 54 for this development (there are 52 space noted on the plans). The LTN 1/20 standards at 1 cycle storage space per bedroom would require 99 cycle spaces.
- No details (other than an indication of “two tiers”) have been provided as to what the cycle storage would comprise. Access to the cycle storage in the Engine House looks quite awkward, particularly for non-standard bikes as it involves a rather narrow and secluded path below the entrance road retaining wall.

CONSULTEE RESPONSES

All consultation responses can be viewed in full on the online application file via the Council’s public website.

However, for the purposes of this report, these are summarised below:

Strategic Housing

A Housing Needs Assessment, undertaken in 2019, identified a shortfall of 549 affordable units per annum in the Borough taking account of affordable housing need and supply.

As there has always been a significant need for affordable housing in Stockport, the Core Strategy sets a strategic of 50% of total provision of all housing. The number of units procured through the planning system or through procuring other resources is significantly less than the annual requirements, meaning that there is still considerable affordable housing need in Stockport.

Development Management Policy H – 3 contains the site size and thresholds. The policy states that Affordable housing is required on sites providing 15 dwellings (gross) or more and sites of 0.5 hectares or more and that, subject to viability, the Council will negotiate to achieve 20-25% affordable housing in the inner urban areas of the borough.

In the case of this proposal, this would equate to 11- 14 affordable dwellings on site. Given the dire need for affordable housing across the borough, it would be preferable for the development to provide 14 affordable units as per policy i.e. the higher quota. It is, however, noted that the applicant has submitted a viability assessment that they feel demonstrates this number of units is not achievable and that no affordable units can be provided.

Should an assessment of the viability statement agree that the scheme is currently unviable with either policy compliant on site provision of affordable housing or a contribution towards provision off site for the balance of the policy compliant affordable dwellings, then it is requested that a s106 agreement be entered into that includes a mechanism for clawback if excess profit is made and that these excess profits be utilised by the council for provision of affordable housing elsewhere in the borough.

In the event that an assessment of the viability assessment concludes that the development is able to provide on site affordable housing provision, then, given the location and the design layout of the developer, shared ownership tenure would be the preferred affordable housing tenure.

Planning Policy (Housing)

No comments received.

Conservation

This site contains a Grade II listed engine house and accumulator tower which was constructed in association with the Grade II listed LNWR railway goods warehouse situated to the south. Although the two buildings are separated by Bowerfold Lane, the engine house was built to provide hydraulic power to drive hoists in the warehouse.

To the north, the site is immediately adjacent to a plot containing a locally listed building, 11 Stitch Lane. Two further heritage assets are situated near to the site on the east side of Wellington Road North; the Grade C listed Christchurch tower and spire located c93m to the south-east and the locally listed former Hope Inn located c45m to the north-east.

The engine house is no longer used for its original purpose and is generally in poor condition, exhibiting clear signs of long term neglect and lack of maintenance. It is now functionally separated from the warehouse and is in partial use as a electricity sub-station.

Clarification was required in relation to a number of issues in relation to the conversion of the tower. Comments are made in relation to finding a viable new use for the listed building, the limitations of the site restricting the number of potential options for different forms of enabling development, and minimising any harmful impact upon the significance and setting of heritage assets.

It is acknowledged that the siting of block towards the north west of the site means that it will be perceived as an independent element and distinct from the designated heritage assets, and also assists in limiting any harmful visual impact upon medium and long distance views and the setting of the Christchurch spire or that of the Hope Inn.

The design of the residential tower has been developed in response to the character and constraints of the site, and the selection of bricks for the proposed external materials offer an opportunity to provide a harmonious visual response to its immediate setting.

The wider public benefits associated with the regeneration of the site are recognised, and it is recommended that an independent viability assessment is undertaken to establish the minimum number of units required to deliver the repair and conversion of the engine house.

Any approval should be subject to a condition that restricts occupancy of the new block until the repair and conversion of the engine house has been completed.

Conditions will also be required to ensure an appropriate level of architectural/archaeological recording is undertaken prior to the commencement of the development together with approval of materials, architectural details, and landscaping.

Following the submission of amended plans, no objections are raised to the proposed development.

Historic England

Historic England provides advice when our engagement can add most value. In this case we are not offering advice. This should not be interpreted as comment on the merits of the application. We suggest that you seek the views of your specialist conservation and archaeological advisers.

Highways

The proposal includes a new site entrance to be formed off Bowerfold Lane, a cul-de-sac leading from Wellington Road North with footways albeit narrow on both sides of the carriageway and carriageway space subjected to No Waiting at any Time Traffic Regulation Orders. Bowerfold Lane is part of the Trans Pennine Trail (TPT) and National Cycle Network (NCN) route 55, designated for walking, cycling and equestrian use and connects across the A6 via controlled crossings.
Public Rights of Way Officer

The submission is accompanied by drawings and a Transport Assessment which includes a review of the highway network, accident data, consideration of site accessibility and assessment of the impact of traffic generated by the development on the local highway network.

In summary, it is considered and accepted that the site is within an accessible location and is suitable in principle for residential development.

However, based on the original submission, a number of issues required further work and information including:

- Increased extent of carriageway widening on Bowerfold Lane
- Footway widening to 3m on Bowerfold Lane
- Increase disabled parking bays numbers
- Electric vehicle charge facility identification
- Clarity over cycle parking
- Establishment of a non-motorised user link to Stitch Lane
- Clarity over Refuse and Recycling arrangements

Following the submission of additional and amended information, the Highway officer outlines that the TA and technical notes include a review of traffic generation associated with the proposal and appraisal of the consequent impact on highway operation and safety. The submitted modelling exercise shows that the signal junction will continue to operate within capacity with the addition of development traffic. In summary, I see no reason to raise concern with the impact of development traffic on the operation of the adjoining highway network.

The design for the site entrance is acceptable in terms of width, entry radii and crossing potential, the detail being a matter capable of conditional control. The access design and highway alignment will afford vehicular visibility splays measuring 2m by 25m, that I am accepting of when having regard to the realistic approach speed of traffic travelling along Bowerfold Lane. Drivers emerging from the access would have adequate inter visibility with other highway users. The widening of the carriageway and footway, as indicated on drawing KN681-PL-02 RevA, addresses my concerns with intensification in use of this corridor.

In conclusion, with the improvement work that is proposed, I am satisfied that a suitable and safe means of access to the site can be provided and that the development would not have an unacceptable impact on the safety of other highway users. The accessibility of the site will also be improved as pedestrians and cyclists will have a compliant and safer link to connect with pedestrian and cycle facilities outside of the site, increasing the potential for and likelihood that sustainable travel choice would be made and thereby reducing car trip reliance.

Within the site, car parking for 29 vehicles is proposed which includes 5 disabled spaces. The provision of 24 general parking space is slightly below a ratio of 50% is considered acceptable for residential development in an edge of Town Centre location where residents will be able to enjoy safe and convenient access to public transport, services and amenities.

Electric vehicle charging facilities will be provide to 11 parking spaces, including to one of the disabled spaces. All other spaces should be future proofed with ducting for cabling to be provided, the overall detail being a matter capable of conditional control.

Covered and secure parking for 52 standard cycles plus up to 6 larger cycles will be provided plus two short stay securing stands close to the new building's entrance. Long stay resident cycle storage is proposed within both the Engine House building

and the new building, the details of stands and racking being matters capable of conditional control.

In conclusion, I am now in a position to support the application and raise no objections subject to conditions.

Transport for Greater Manchester

Initial issues were raised including the following:

- Road accident data should be updated to include the whole of 2021, 2021 data is now available.
- The trip generation and distribution methodologies are acceptable
- The TA does not contain traffic diagrams showing the development flows and the base scenarios plus development flows. In order to validate the models, this information together with the Linsig model file for the signalised junction is required.
- TfGM would suggest that a review of the Traffic Regulation Orders in the vicinity of the development is undertaken.
- A robust Construction Traffic Management Plan should be employed as part of the development to minimise disruption during the construction period.
- In order to encourage walking and cycling, it should be ensured that the pedestrian and cycling environment, within and around the site, is designed to be as safe, attractive and convenient as possible, including natural surveillance where possible.
- The cycle facilities should be covered and secure, with measures such as the installation of CCTV and appropriate lighting to ensure security.
- TfGM recommends that a full Travel Plan is produced for the development,

Following the submission of the requested information, TfGM confirm that the updated response from the Consultant Hydrock confirms that the comments relating to tactile paving, carriageway widening and footway provision have been addressed. The junction is approaching maximum practical capacity but since it is on SCOOT control the junction is actually likely to run better than the modelling predicts. Therefore, there are no further comments required from TfGM's perspective.

Trans Pennine Trail Officer

The documentation makes no reference to LTN1/20 or equestrians using this section of Trans Pennine Trail. 2m entry provision into the site for sustainable transport users should be 3m as a minimum.

It is unclear how the safety of all users of the TPT will be protected along Bowerfold Road both as part of the building phase and afterwards and in terms of egress from the site where this will be uphill. The TPT is full multi-use at this location (walkers, cyclists and horse riders).

There is concern that there will be a ramp from the site to Bowerfold Road, which will impact visibility from the site.

No cycle parking shown on plan but it is believed there is cycle parking on the ground floor plus a store in the main block. The level indicated does not meet LTN1/20 standards in terms of provision.

Bowerfold Lane – indicates 3.5m footpath widening. Is it intended for this to be used as a shared use for pedestrians and cyclists? If so the noted pedestrian crossing should also cater for cyclists. If not, what provision is there for safe cycling measures?

Arboriculture

Conservation Area Designations:

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

Legally Protected Trees:

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

The proposed development would have a potentially negative impact on several low amenity trees located in the proposed construction work area site which are low value amenity and biodiversity but high screening potential, so the proposed works will have a small negative impact on trees.

The site has a poor level of vegetation and trees and as such, there cannot be any loss of trees on site as this will have a negative impact on amenity and biodiversity, without the submission of an improved landscaping design to show the replacement and enhancement of the tree cover on site. The trees offer a low level of biodiversity/habitat benefit and as such as many as possible need retaining as the loss would be unacceptable without an increased landscaping design submission or conditioned.

In principle the scheme will have a small negative impact on the trees in the area and so will require the submission of a landscaping scheme to show the replacement and enhancement of the site to comply with policy as well as the submission of an advisory and protective fencing restricting all access to the protected trees in the working area/storage areas of the site. This should have been submitted as part of the planning application but can be conditioned and submitted later then this will resolve any tree related issues.

Nature Development

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

Part of the site has however been identified as an opportunity area within the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) pilot study for Greater Manchester (https://gmgreencity.com/resource_library/local-nature-recovery-strategy/). 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.

Designated Green Chain is also present along the railway line (the Green Chain boundary is approx. 90m northeast of the application site boundary) - <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/development-plan/unitary-development-plan>

An Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey and daytime bat roost assessment survey has been carried out and submitted with the application. The survey was carried out in December 2021 (bEk Enviro Ltd, 2022). Surveys were updated in 2023; Bat Emergence Survey report by bEk Enviro Ltd (October 2023) and Badger Walkover

Survey bEk Enviro Ltd (June 2023). No setts or signs of badger using the site were found during the survey. However, 2 potential setts were located within 30m of the site boundary. Habitats on site were mapped and the potential for protected species to be present was assessed. Habitats on site comprise buildings, hard standing, scrub, scattered trees and ephemeral/short perennial vegetation.

A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Metric 4.0 and associated report has been submitted (Biodiversity Net Gain Design Stage Report, bEk, November 2023).

A sufficient level of ecological surveys has now been undertaken for the proposed development. The Biodiversity Net Gain assessment indicates a net gain of at least 40% on the site which is acceptable as long as the hedgerows are planted, maintained and managed in a suitable manner which should be detailed in the Landscape and Environmental Management Plan or similar document with the accompanying Biodiversity Enhancements Plan.

The existing listed engine house building on the site has been confirmed as a bat roost during the 2023 surveys. The proposals would result in the destruction of a bat roost with the potential to kill or injure bats without appropriate mitigation and compensation measures. As a result a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) will be required from Natural England. The EC Habitats Directive 1992 requires the UK to maintain a system of strict protection for protected species and their habitats.

Conditions are requested in relation to the submission of a biodiversity net gain management plan, compliance with the bat reports and mitigation strategies, the receipt of a bat licence prior to the commencement of any works, no works to take place during bird nesting season, the submission of an updated badger survey, the implementation of reasonable avoidance measures relating to badgers, biodiversity enhancements and the submission of a lighting strategy. An informative should also be attached to any planning permission granted so that the applicant is aware of the shelf life of survey data.

Air Quality

The air quality assessment has been reviewed and Environmental Protection are happy with its conclusion. Therefore, there are no objections to the proposed development.

However, a dust management plan for the demolition and construction phases of the development is required for approval prior to the commencement of the development.

Environmental Health (Noise)

The proposal has been assessed in relation to impact upon the environmental quality of life to existing sensitive receptors, in proximity to the proposed development and new residential receptors, introduced at this location.

The proposal site is located within a DEFRA road/rail noise contour mapped area. The site does not fall within an area affected by aircraft noise that the Stockport UDP, Review (May 2006), EP1.10 Aircraft Noise, will control new development.

An acoustic report has been submitted in support of the application:
RS Acoustics Engineering, Proposed Apartments Stitch Lane, Stockport, Noise Assessment Report, RSA368/2021, 22 July 2022, version 2. From the collation of

representative noise level data for the site and taking into account the internal noise design criteria, the consultant has recommended a noise insulation scheme: acoustic mitigated window specification and ventilation strategy. The report recommends noise mitigation measures at section 4, designed to achieve BS 8233: 2014 and WHO guidelines; to ensure that future occupants are not adversely affected by transportation noise sources.

This service accepts the NIA methodology, conclusion and recommendations - noise insulation scheme: window specification and ventilation strategy. And VDV calculations and predictions for the project.

Recommended conditions relate to full compliance with the submitted Noise Impact Assessment and the recommended mitigation measures, the submission of a noise mitigation validation report, and the submission of a construction environmental management plan. Recommended informatives relate to construction hours and a piling method statement.

Contaminated Land

The proposed development site has had heavy former industrial use and has contained a chimney, railway lines and a turntable. It is also adjacent to a railway line dating back to 1848. In addition to this, there is an electricity substation which will be relocated as part of the proposed development, and this can be a source of PCB contamination. The developer will be introducing a substantial amount of new additional receptors to the site.

As such, the developer will need to undertake a site investigation for soil and gas, which should be requested for submission via appropriately worded conditions. Post validation certificates would also be required prior to the occupation of any development.

LLFA

The initial proposal is to infiltrate into the ground via permeable paving. This is ideal and is one of the more sustainable approaches.

However, it was not clear from the wording whether infiltration testing has been undertaken already. The results following infiltration testing was requested. If the results prove that infiltration into the ground is feasible, then the applicant should follow through with this being their proposed drainage strategy.

Additionally, the applicant is required to investigate the incorporation of other 'control at source' methods e.g. rainwater harvesting and water butts. This would help recycle and reuse the surface water, as well as further restrict the amount of flow going into the ground.

Following the review of the additional documentation for this application.

- Preliminary Drainage Strategy - Stitch Lane REV B – FINAL

The LLFA recommends that the application is acceptable in principle subject to a detailed design. With the following condition:

- A pre-occupancy Condition.

The development shall be completed and maintained in full accordance with the approved details.

Planning Policy (Energy)

It was confirmed that the information supplied with the original application did not adequately or clearly demonstrate how the development will respond to the challenges presented by climate change.

Following the submission of an amended Energy Assessment report, it was confirmed that the development will include ASHP technology and solar panels on the roof. On this basis, it is confirmed that the supplied information now adequately demonstrates how the development will respond to the challenges presented by climate change.

Design for Security

Having looked at the proposals and read the Crime Impact Statement, GMP have the following comments.

- It is recommended that the ramped access route to the car parking area is restricted to residents, protecting parked vehicles and private gardens.
- Private gardens should be clearly defined as such and have a robust boundary.
- It is highly recommended that the development is build to Secured by Design standards.

GMAAS

The application is supported by an archaeological desk-based assessment and a heritage impact statement, both prepared by Spencer Heritage Services, which demonstrate that the application site was developed from the mid-19th century as a hub for the local railway infrastructure established by the London North Western Railway (LNWR) and was occupied by the engine house, accumulator tower, stores, offices and workshops, together with a network of railway tracks and a turntable. These two documents have been undertaken in accordance with Paragraph 194 of the NPPF, and adequately assess the significance to the archaeological resource and heritage assets within the application area.

GMAAS concurs with the conclusions drawn from the archaeological assessment, and recommends that the site is subject to intrusive archaeological investigation in advance of development. This should comprise an initial phase of evaluation trenching, followed if necessary by open-area excavation and recording. GMAAS accepts that any below-ground remains that do survive are not going to be of national significance and, as such, would be content to see the archaeological investigation conditioned on the planning consent.

Network Rail

An initial holding objection was received for the application, with a request for the applicant to engage with the Asset Protection team at NR.

Following a site meeting, NR deemed the associated proposals as feasible on the provision a Basic Asset Protection Agreement is in place prior to any construction

works commencing. So the holding objection is removed subject to the BAPA and Network Rail's agreement to works being conditioned in the decision notice.

United Utilities

The application needs to address the provision of a sustainable surface water drainage strategy and effective management and maintenance of sustainable drainage systems.

Other comments raised include water and wastewater services, and UU property, assets and infrastructure.

Health and Safety Executive

Headline Response from the HSE - Content

Following a review of the information provided in the planning application, HSE is content with the fire safety design as set out in the project description, to the extent it affects land use planning considerations. However, HSE has identified some matters that the applicant should try to address, in advance of later regulatory stages.

ANALYSIS

By way of introduction, the application site occupies a visually prominent site on a main radial route into the Stockport town centre and as a result of its vacant nature and general condition, causes blight to the locality. 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.

Members are advised that at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (para10). Para 11 of the NPPF 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 (this includes for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where the LPA cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing), granting planning permission unless:
 - the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of importance (that is those specifically relating to designated heritage assets (conservation areas and listed buildings)) provides a clear reason for refusing planning permission or
 - 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, the relevant elements of Core Strategy policies CS4 and H2 which seek to deliver housing supply that are considered to be out of date. That being the case, the tilted balance as referred to in para 11 of the NPPF directs that permission should be approved unless:

- there are compelling reasons in relation to the impact of the development upon the Conservation Area and the setting of adjacent listed buildings to refuse planning permission or
- the adverse impacts of approving planning permission (such as the loss of the community facility, local open space or sports pitch or impact on residential amenity, highway safety etc) would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

The main issues for consideration are as follows:-

- Principle of residential accommodation including affordable housing and density
- Impact on the Listed Building
- Impact on the character of the locality
- Impact on residential amenity
- Highway impacts
- Other matters such as ecology, trees, energy efficient design, contamination and drainage.

Having regard to this presumption in favour of residential development, Members are advised accordingly:

Principle of Residential Accommodation

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/Large Local Centres; and other accessible locations). Policy H-2 confirms that when there is less than a 5 year deliverable supply of housing (as is currently the case) the required accessibility scores will be lowered to allow the deliverable supply to be topped up by other sites in accessible locations. This position has been regularly assessed to ensure that the score reflects the ability to 'top up' supply to a 5 year position. However, the scale of shortfall is such that in order to genuinely reflect the current position in that regard the accessibility score has been reduced to zero.

As referred to at the start of this analysis, the fact that the Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing means that elements of Core Strategy policies CS4 and H2 are considered to be out of date. As such the tilted balance in favour of the residential redevelopment of the site as set out in para 11 of the NPPF is engaged.

The application site comprises a brownfield site in an accessible area on the main radial route of Wellington Road North served by public transport and located close to the Town Centre and the M60 motorway. The site is within the catchment area of Stockport Town Centre for shopping and leisure facilities and so the proposal is therefore in compliance with policies CS4 and H2 of the Core Strategy. The application site is located within a Predominantly Residential Area as allocated in the saved UDP review and the redevelopment of the site for residential purposes is also in accordance with para 124 of the NPPF which places substantial weight upon the use of brownfield land within settlements for homes and supporting opportunities to remediate derelict land.

With regard to the density of the proposed development, policy CS3 of the Core Strategy confirms that for sites close to or within Town Centres/District Centres, housing densities of 70 dwellings per hectare (dph) and above are

commonplace. Moving away from these central locations, densities should gradually decrease, first to around 50 dph then to around 40 dph, as the proportion of houses increases. Developments in accessible suburban locations may be expected to provide the full range of house types, from low-cost 2 bed terraces to larger detached properties. However, they should still achieve a density of 30 dph.

The delivery of 54 apartments (10 no. 1-beds, 43 no. 2-beds and 1 no. 3-bed) on this brownfield site close to Stockport town centre is therefore welcomed and is supported not only by policies CS2, CS3 and CS4 but also the NPPF. The proposal makes good use of land, at 216 dwellings per hectare and, as proposed, will deliver a significant level of housing, thus helping to improve the Council's general housing land supply position.

While the proposed density in this area is higher than outlined in Core Strategy Policy CS3, the Council is in a position of significant undersupply and the policy should also be read in the context of the NPPF. The NPPF states that "where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site" (Para 129). Given this, the density of the proposed scheme is considered to accord with this approach.

Affordable Housing Provision, Formal Recreation and Children's Play Provision and Viability

Paragraph 64 of NPPF requires that where a need for affordable housing has been identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required with an expectation that this should be provided on-site unless:

- (a) off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified; and
- (b) the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.

Paragraph 65 of NPPF states that in order to support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount. A footnote advises that this should be equivalent to the existing gross floorspace of the existing buildings and does not apply to vacant buildings which have been abandoned.

Core Strategy Policy H-3 sets out that within this area of Stockport, developments will be expected to provide between 20-25% affordable homes. This would equate to 11 to 14 affordable dwellings within this development.

Saved UDP policy L1.2, Core Strategy DPD policy SIE-2 and the Open Space Provision and Commuted Payments SPD identify the importance of open space and children's play facilities to meet the needs of the community and a require the include provision for recreation and amenity open space either on-site or off-site, dependent on the population of the proposed development.

As there is no space on the application site to accommodate formal recreation or children's play facilities, Core Strategy SIE-2 and the 2019 Open Space Provision and Commuted Payments SPD requires the payment of commuted

sums to fund and maintain off-site provision. The total increase in population capacity through the development would be 153 people, which would mean that the proposed development generates a total commuted sum requirement of £228,888.00.

The applicant has argued that in this case, financial viability prohibits the provision of any affordable housing units within the development or any payment of any commuted sums and has submitted a viability assessment to support their position. In response, the Council has appointed a specialist consultant to undertake an independent assessment of the information. After careful analysis, the consultant has concluded that the scheme is unable to provide any Section 106 contributions in any scenario or provide the affordable housing provision in this case. They are satisfied with the responses provided by the applicant and therefore, it has been confirmed that the Viability Assessment provides relevant justification for not fully complying with the usual policy requirements in relation to usual Affordable Housing or Open Space contributions.

It should be noted that the proposed new residential block is enabling development to ensure the retention, renovation and conversion of the Listed Engine House. The viability assessment submitted shows that there is a significant viability gap even for the development now proposed, and as such, a scheme that included a smaller element of new build would not be viable to proceed and the Listed building would be left undeveloped. Given the viability gap discovered, it is considered that the affordable housing requirement and open space commuted sums should be waived in this case in order to promote the delivery of the development. This policy shortfall does however weigh against the proposals in the overall planning balance.

Notwithstanding the above, a S106 agreement will be included in any approval decision that includes a mechanism for clawback if excess profit is made from the development once completed. These excess profits could then be utilised by the Council for the provision of affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough and / or for the provision or improvement of open space and children's play facilities to meet the needs of the community.

Heritage Impacts

As outlined above, the application site contains a Grade II Listed Building and is located adjacent to a further Listed Building across Bowerfold Lane. This includes the Engine House LNWR (NHLE 1309371) on the site and the Goods Warehouse (NHLE 1067164) opposite. On this basis, the application is accompanied by a Statement of Heritage Significance and Impact Assessment completed by Spencer Heritage Services.

This report finds that the proposed works have been designed to retain the maximum amount of historic fabric and undertake informed restoration where needed. A schedule of repairs required is included within the Design and Access Statement, which is submitted to accompany the application. As the current condition of the building is poor, the proposed works to the Engine House would constitute a beneficial impact upon the property overall. The report concludes that the works to the property would be viewed as a moderate magnitude of change, as the works will alter the historic building so that it is significantly modified. Works of a moderate nature to a heritage asset of medium value, result in a moderate impact upon the asset. Due to the amount of restoration work proposed and the fact that the overall historic character of the structure will be

retained, this assessment concludes that the proposed works will have an overall moderate beneficial impact upon the Engine House.

In relation to the new build element of the proposals, the report states that the proposed new development also has the potential to affect the setting of the Engine House and Goods Warehouse. Due to the location of the proposed apartment building, it will not form part of key views of the asset and will not physically or visually isolate the Warehouse from the Engine House. The proposed development has been designed to reflect the historic character of the wider site. The design is for a cylindrical structure, a footprint that reflects historic elements of the site such as turn tables and is reminiscent of components of machinery. The footprint was also chosen to help open up the site, ensure that the new development did not dominate the Engine House, or block views of the Engine House and Goods Warehouse from Wellington Road North.

The Engine House is currently unused and in a state of disrepair. The proposed works constitute an appropriate and viable use, securing the future of the structure moving forwards. Through the process of pre-application consultation, the proposal plans have been designed to retain the maximum amount of historic fabric and retain the industrial character of the original structure. Local interest groups, appropriate museums and a mechanical engineer who specialises in historic sites such as this were consulted for their opinion on the re-use of the Engine House. All were in agreement, that the remaining equipment in the accumulator tower and Engine House were not of high significance.

The site is currently vacant, inaccessible to the public and visually screened off from Wellington Road North via a tall unsightly fence. The proposed development will open up the site and provide views of the Engine House and Goods Warehouse from along Wellington Road North, better revealing the significance of both heritage assets. The proposed development of the site will constitute a permanent alteration to the setting of the Engine House and Warehouse, but one that should be viewed as a positive alteration.

The application has been fully considered by the Council's Conservation officer who outlines that it is acknowledged that finding a viable new use for the listed building is key to securing its long term preservation and the unique nature of its size, form and construction means that it has limited capacity to accommodate a wide range of potential alternative uses. The limitations of the site in terms of levels, access and layout also restrict the number of potential options for different forms of enabling development to support delivery of a viable conversion scheme whilst minimising any harmful impact upon the significance and setting of heritage assets. The height of the proposed residential block is considerably taller than the buildings within its immediate setting, including the engine house itself, the 4 storey listed warehouse and 2 storey houses along Stitch Lane.

However, it is acknowledged that the siting of block towards the north west of the site means that it will be perceived as an independent element and distinct from the designated heritage assets, with the legibility and visual association between the warehouse and engine house maintained. The siting of the residential block towards the rear of the site also assists in limiting any harmful visual impact upon medium and long distance views and the setting of the Christchurch spire or that of the Hope Inn.

The design of the residential tower has been developed in response to the character and constraints of the site, with the circular plan form intended to

provide a link to its rail-related former function, albeit there is no evidence that a railway roundhouse or turntable ever existed on this site. The selection of bricks for the proposed external materials offer an opportunity to provide a harmonious visual response to its immediate setting. It has been demonstrated that the scale of the proposed development is the minimum necessary to secure the conversion of the engine house, and as such, the level of harm to the setting of heritage assets is outweighed by the benefits of securing the long-term preservation of the engine house in a viable new use. It is recommended that any approval should be subject to a condition that restricts occupancy of the new block until the repair and conversion of the engine house has been completed.

Conditions will also be required to ensure an appropriate level of architectural/archaeological recording is undertaken prior to the commencement of the development together with approval of materials, architectural details, and landscaping.

Paragraph 208 of the NPPF advises “*where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal*”. This policy test is echoed in Core Strategy policy SIE-3. It is considered that the public benefits offered by the development, in terms of the delivery of much needed housing and other regeneration benefits, far outweigh any limited harm to the designated heritage assets at the site and in the vicinity.

On that basis, no conflict with relevant local or national policies would arise if planning permission were granted, subject to appropriate conditions relating to the selection of external materials, architectural detailing (in particular of windows and external doors) and landscaping.

Design, Siting and Impact on Visual Amenity

Policy SIE-1 ‘Quality Places’ states that development that is designed and landscaped 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 account should be had to the materials, site’s characteristics, safety and security of users, provision and maintenance of access, privacy and amenity and landscaping.

As outlined within the Design and Access Statement, the proposals for the conversion of the Listed Engine House are heritage led, and much of architectural elements of the building are to be retained and enhanced. This is covered in more detailed in the Heritage section above. Elevational alterations are proposed, however these are to improve the relationship of the building to the surrounding street scene and area, whilst retaining the historic fabric and character of the former engine house.

In terms of the new build ‘Roundhouse’ tower, the position of the building to the rear of the site rather than to the front onto Wellington Road North was due to conservation reasons and not blocking views of the Engine House from the main road. Currently, the building is barely visible from Wellington Road North. It was agreed, through consultation with the conservation officer, that a building of such industrial heritage should be showcased. All new developments should ensure that they respond to the surrounding context of the site and maximise frontages with the street scene and other important features of sites. Despite the location of the main block to the rear of the site, the proposed development responds

positively to the road frontages by habitable room windows and amenity spaces facing onto these street frontages to provide activity, presence and natural surveillance over the street scenes. Therefore, it is considered acceptable in this case, for the building to be located in the north western corner.

Furthermore, as outlined within the Design and Access Statement, whilst other less conventional footprints were considered, a cylindrical shape was chosen for the building. This visually opened up the site, drawing the eye towards the Engine House. Additionally, the circular footprint of the building echoes the rail turntable that once existed on site, north-west of the Engine House. This form of roundhouse is also a traditional form for steam engine maintenance sheds, although sadly, there is only one good example which still exists (Derby Roundhouse).

The proposals have been considered within the existing context and it is acknowledged that the 8 storey building is taller than the surrounding buildings. The scheme has been designed to be stepped at the higher levels to reduce the overall bulk and mass of the tower and the main bulk of the building with full floors up to 5 storeys sits at a similar height to the adjacent Bryant House Warehouse building. As outlined above, the development sits below the surrounding buildings due to the change in site levels, and as such the lower ground floor would not be visible beyond the site boundaries. The building being circular, also reduces the overall bulk and mass of the structure.

As mentioned above, the proposed Roundhouse tower is required as enabling development to ensure the retention, renovation and conversion of the Listed Building. The costs involved in the removal of the former engine machinery are substantial and as such, a certain amount of new development is required to fund these works. Therefore, even though the scale of the building is higher than those closest to it, and the result would have some dominant and overbearing impacts, the wider regeneration benefits, the future protection of the listed building and the provision of much needed residential accommodation in the area outweighs the potential harm from the height of the new development building. As such, it is considered that the proposed development has secured an appropriate scale for the setting.

The application site is bounded by buildings of various styles and ages. Therefore, in terms of design approach, the proposals include both traditional and contemporary architecture to be in keeping with the surroundings. It is proposed that brickwork be the predominant material for the apartment building exterior to be in keeping with the heritage of the site and will harmonise with the surrounding railway architecture. Additionally, painted steel railings to balconies will provide visual interest, contrasting with the brickwork and echoing the many metalwork walkways, features, and gantries typical of Victorian railway architecture. The proposed design will utilise deep reveals for window openings and balconies. These will reflect the windows and loading bays of the goods warehouse. Additionally, the balconies will visually break up the brickwork, as well as providing valuable external private relaxation space for the residents.

Therefore, on this basis, no concerns are raised to the general design and proposed use of materials for the proposed development. Suitably worded planning conditions would be imposed to secure appropriate materials of external construction and boundary treatments.

It is acknowledged that there is limited private outdoor amenity space for the future occupants of the development. As outlined in the submission, all proposed apartments within the roundhouse would have either a private balcony or a private garden area. 43 no. apartments have private balconies and 9 no. apartments have private garden areas. The private gardens are provided at ground level and also at roof top level. The balcony sizes vary in size between 6.5 to 11.2 sqm. In addition to this, there is also a small communal roof top garden on the 5th floor measuring approx. 75 sqm. There is no private outdoor amenity space for the apartments created within the converted engine house.

These levels of amenity space provided do fall below the guidance provided within the Residential Design SPD and this must be noted. However, it is also necessary to highlight that the development is sustainably located close to the Town Centre, and is in close proximity to a number of other parks and green spaces including Heaton Norris Park (300m away), open space area located along Bowerfold Lane and the new podium park recently completed at the Interchange, among other Town Centre open spaces.

Amenity space shortfalls are considered to be outweighed by the requirement for additional dwellings within the Borough and the current focus within Paragraphs 122 and 123 of the NPPF, which seek to maximise densities within residential developments where there is an identified housing need. As such, the NPPF desire to maximise densities within residential developments effectively supersedes private amenity space requirement guidance as recommended within the SPD, which Members will be aware has been reflected in recent appeal decisions.

Therefore, overall, the siting and layout of the development maximises the relationship with the existing and new surrounding road network. The siting and layout provides a logical arrangement and is therefore considered to be in accordance with the development plan.

In view of the above, it is considered that the size, scale, height and design of the proposed development could be successfully accommodated on the site without causing undue harm to the character of the street scene or the visual amenity of the area. 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.

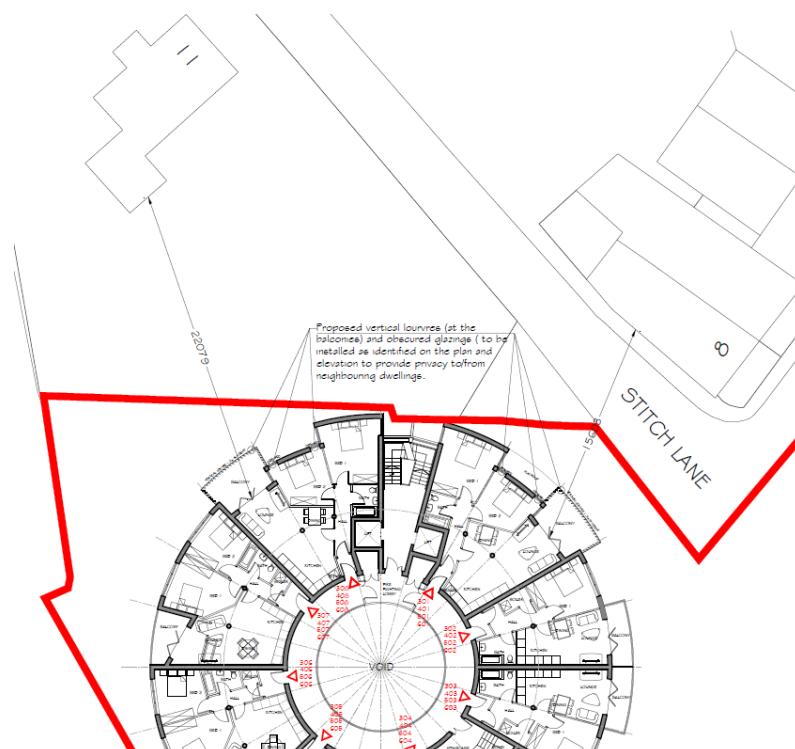
Impact on Residential Amenity

Policies H1, CS8, SIE1 and SIE3 of the Core Strategy together with para 127 of the NPPF seek to ensure that developments provide for a good standard of amenity not only for existing but also future occupiers. The Core Strategy policies are supported by the Council's SPD 'Design of Residential Development' which provides detailed guidance regarding the layout of development and its relationship with existing properties. Members are reminded that the SPD is not policy, but is simply guidance to influence but not dictate development. There is acknowledgement within that document that rigid adherence with the guidance can stifle creativity and result in uniformity of development.

The closest relationship of the development to existing residential properties is to the north with the existing houses on Stitch Lane. It is acknowledged that the properties located at Nos. 8 and 11 Stitch Lane have habitable room windows facing the application site and the new 8 storey residential block, even though these elevations are the sides of these properties (not the front or rear).

In relation to overlooking, the Council's SPD 'Design of Residential Development' guidance advises that the minimum privacy distances are 21m from habitable room to habitable room up to 2 storeys and 24m for 3 + storeys. However, it also outlines that imaginative design solutions and a more flexible approach to the distances required between new dwellings is required, and that these standards are more reflective of the distances required in a more suburban setting.

The application has been submitted with a Planning Statement – Privacy and Amenity Standards document which provides an assessment of the proposals in relation to the Council's privacy and amenity space standards. This confirms that the south western elevation to No. 8 Stitch Lane is situated approximately 13 metres from the north eastern face of the proposed roundhouse block. The south eastern elevation of No. 11 Stitch Lane is situated approximately 19.5 metres from the north western face of the Roundhouse building, and the new building is located close to the garden boundary with No. 11 Stitch Lane. The relationships can be seen in the plan below and within the drawings pack attached to this report.



It is acknowledged that these distances fall short of the standards outlined in the SPD. However, the building has been designed to incorporate a number of features that would safeguard the privacy conditions of these adjacent properties. The quarter segment of the roundhouse elevation facing Nos. 8 and 11 Stitch Lane has been designed with a stepped profile, allowing bedroom windows where necessary to face along the new building elevation rather than outwards in the direction of the adjacent properties. Secondary bedroom windows facing outwards would be fitted with opaque glass to ensure there is no outlook from these windows, again safeguarding the privacy of the existing properties. Finally, vertical louvres are shown to be fitted to the balconies in order to minimise the impact of any potential overlooking but whilst maintaining sufficient daylighting.

Therefore, although it is acknowledged that the proposed development does not meet the minimum space standards outlined within the SPD for this relationship, it is considered that the applicant has used imaginative design solutions within

the scheme to reduce the amount of overlooking as much as possible. If the whole of the elevations facing the existing properties had been void of any windows to stop any overlooking at all, this would have resulted in a very poor quality and harsh design, with no activity, presence or natural surveillance over Stitch Lane. The outlook from the existing windows over this large expanse of brickwork would also have been very poor and detrimental to visual amenity.

Therefore, it is considered that on the basis of the context provided within the submitted analysis in relation to the design solutions proposed, this constitutes a more flexible approach within this dense urban setting close to the town centre, where reduced standards are more appropriate in order to not stifle development or prohibit regeneration aims.

In relation to an overshadowing impact, the application has been accompanied by a daylight and sunlight assessment completed by Stroma Built Environment. A technical analysis has been completed using the methodologies set out within the Building Research Establishment Guidelines entitled 'Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight – A Guide to Good Practice (2011)'. It is noted that the BRE guidelines provide a recommendation to inform site layout and design and are not mandatory. Their interpretation may be treated flexibly depending on the specifics of each site and importantly to this case, the guide recommends a more contextual approach and setting alternative target values for city centres and urban environments. Notwithstanding this, the results of the assessment conducted indicate an acceptable level of compliance for the surrounding properties when considered against the flexibility with which the BRE guidelines are intended to be used.

The Daylight results submitted show that the majority of the windows of the surrounding buildings are unaffected by the proposed development. A small number of windows on Nos. 8 and 11 Stitch Lane (closest buildings) have the daylight impacted. However, all the windows affected still achieve reasonable levels of daylight VSC results are close to the recommended VSC value of 27%.

All windows of the surrounding buildings still achieve the BR209 recommendations for Annual Sunlight Hours (APSH). The majority of surrounding buildings also still meet the recommendations for Winter Probable Sunlight Hours (WPSH). In the majority of windows, occupants are unlikely to notice the marginal changes in WPSH. Only 3 windows show significant reduction in the WPSH, which could be noticed by occupants. However, generally these windows did not achieve the WPSH prior to the proposed development or there is only a marginal change with the no difference likely to be noticed by the occupants. This is due to the presence of the existing Goods Warehouse, which already casts significant shadows over these properties in the winter.

In conclusion, the report confirms that overall, considering the location of the site, the anticipated increase in height and density in the area and flexibility with which the BRE guide is intended to be used, the impact of the scheme on the surrounding residential properties is considered wholly acceptable.

On the basis of the above, it is considered that the proposed development as a whole, will provide for a good standard of amenity and will not cause significant harm to existing occupiers by reason of overshadowing, loss of outlook, overlooking or loss of privacy. Noting that there is a presumption in favour of residential development as engaged by para 11 of the NPPF it is not considered that the limited instances of failure to comply with this guidance as set out above

significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposed development. That being the case, the development is considered to accord with policies H1, CS8, SIE1 and SIE3 of the Core Strategy together with the relevant guidance within the NPPF.

Traffic Generation, Access, Highway Safety and Parking

A Transport Statement has been submitted in support of the application. The comments received to the application from the Council Highway Engineer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above. The report concludes that the development would not result in a severe impact on highway operation or unacceptable effects on road safety.

The proposal includes a new site entrance to be formed on Bowerfold Lane, which is a cul-de-sac leading from Wellington Road North with footways albeit narrow on both sides of a carriageway that is subjected to No Waiting at any Time Traffic Regulation Orders. Bowerfold Lane is part of the Trans Pennine Trail (TPT) and National Cycle Network (NCN) route 55, designated for walking, cycling and equestrian use and connects across the A6 via controlled crossings. Comments have been received from a number of groups linked to the TPT and these can be seen above.

The submission is accompanied by drawings, a Transport Assessment and additional technical notes that include a review of the highway network, accident data, consideration of site accessibility and assessment of the impact of traffic generated by the development on the local highway network.

In terms of accessibility, the site is relatively close to the Town Centre, amenities, services and schools. The nearest railway station is approximately 1.4km away from the site and within walking and cycling distance. There are bus stops nearby on the A6 that are well served by a number of services offering regular and convenient opportunities to travel around Stockport and to neighbouring parts of Greater Manchester. The adjacent TPT and NCN route also offer reasonable connectivity by cyclists, albeit there are deficiencies in the route along Bowerfold Lane, which have required to be addressed as part of the development proposals to mitigate the intensification in use of the route that would arise.

In summary, it is considered and accepted that the site is within an accessible location and is appropriate for residential development. The TA and technical notes include a review of traffic generation associated with the proposal and appraisal of the consequent impact on highway operation and safety. Trip generation for the proposed development is shown to be 13 two-way trips in the weekday morning peak and 14 two-way trips in the weekday evening peak. Whilst these figures are low in terms of volume, representing only one movement every four minutes, the proximity to the A6 and a signal controlled junction and the restricted nature of Bowerfold Lane, an operational review of the signal junction accompanies the submission. The submitted modelling exercise shows that the signal junction will continue to operate within capacity with the addition of development traffic.

Transport for Greater Manchester's (TfGM) Urban Traffic Control Unit (UTC) has been consulted and has commented on the traffic modelling exercise, concluding that the junction should continue to operate within capacity with the imposition of development traffic and as such, it raises no concerns. In summary, there are no

reasons to raise concern with the impact of development traffic on the operation of the adjoining highway network.

However, initial concerns were raised with the applicant in relation to the potential effects of additional traffic and intensification in the use of this road, and the impacts this could have on the safety of other users of Bowerfold Lane and the A6 junction. This has been discussed with the applicant and the submission has been subsequently revised to incorporate mitigation and improvement.

A new site entrance is proposed on Bowerfold Lane for vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian purposes. The entrance is close to the signalised junction with the A6, although sufficiently displaced so not to cause operational difficulty at the signals. As part of the development, the Bowerfold Lane carriageway would be widened to 5.5m between the site access and the A6 junction kerblines and the footway alongside widened to 3.5m before tying in to the A6 footway. The design for the site entrance is acceptable in terms of width, entry radii and crossing potential, and the full detail design is a matter capable of conditional control. The access design and highway alignment will afford adequate vehicular visibility splays measuring 2m by 25m, which is considered to be acceptable when having regard to the realistic approach speed of traffic travelling along Bowerfold Lane. Drivers emerging from the access would have adequate inter visibility with other highway users.

The widening of the carriageway and footway, as indicated on drawing KN681-PL-02 RevA, adequately addresses the initial concerns raised by the Highway officer with the intensification in use of this corridor. Larger vehicles would be able to pass, which should avoid footway overrun and the approach to the junction would have less risk of conflict. Non-motorised users would have a wider shared footway that creates a safer environment and this will tie in with the A6 corridor and junction crossing facilities. This would address the concerns also raised by the groups using the TPT.

The widened highway would require retention and possibly the installation of a parapet due to level differences between the highway and the site. Structural approval will be required for any retaining structure or means of retention. The detail of widening, structural and construction works are matters that can be covered under a planning condition and the widened footway would be dedicated as highway upon completion.

In conclusion, with the improvement work that is proposed, the Highway officer is now satisfied that a suitable and safe means of access to the site can be provided and that the development would not have an unacceptable impact on the safety of other highway users. The accessibility of the site will also be improved as pedestrians and cyclists will have a compliant and safer link to connect with pedestrian and cycle facilities outside of the site, increasing the potential for and likelihood that sustainable travel choice would be made and thereby reducing car trip reliance.

Within the site, car parking for 29 vehicles is proposed, which includes 5 disabled spaces. The provision of 24 general parking space is slightly below a ratio of 50%, however this is considered to be acceptable in this case for a residential development in an edge of Town Centre location, where residents will be able to enjoy safe and convenient access to public transport, services and amenities. Where residents are not assured access to a parking space, it can influence occupation and encourage residents to make the choice to live more sustainable

and active lives without necessarily needing to own a car. The surrounding highway network is subjected to traffic regulatory control, so overspill parking should not give rise to operational or safety concern. Therefore, it is not considered that reason for refusal or any objection can be justified based upon the level of parking that is proposed.

Electric vehicle charging facilities will be provided to 11 parking spaces, including to one of the disabled spaces. All other spaces should be future proofed with ducting for cabling to be provided, the overall detail being a matter capable of conditional control. Covered and secure parking for 52 standard cycles, plus up to 6 larger cycles, will be provided for the residents of the development within the two buildings. Two short stay securing stands are also proposed close to the new building's entrance. Long stay resident cycle storage is proposed within both the Engine House building and the new building, the details of stands and racking being matters capable of conditional control.

Refuse and recycling receptacles will be stored within the new building and the drawings indicate sufficient capacity to satisfy residents' typical requirements will be made. It is anticipated that collections will take place from Stitch Lane or potentially within the site, both of which would be considered to be acceptable. A carefully worded waste management plan will be required for submission via a condition, as site management will need to move receptacles on collection day.

The internal site layout has acceptable provision for pedestrian movement, has a link to Stitch Lane for residents and sufficient manoeuvring space for refuse sized or daily delivery vehicles.

In conclusion, in the absence of objections from the Highway Engineer and subject to the imposition of the conditions recommended by the Highway Engineer, it is considered that the proposed development should not have a material impact on the local highway network. As such, the proposal complies with Core Strategy DPD policies SD-6, SIE-1, CS9, T-1, T-2 and T-3 and the Sustainable Transport SPD.

Landscaping and Impact on Trees

Due to the nature of the existing site, mainly comprising the existing Listed building and the existing surface car parking, the level of trees and planting is low. The application is accompanied by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA), which has been assessed by the Council Arboricultural Officer. The detailed comments received to the application are contained within the Consultee Responses section above.

The AIA outlines that the site survey identified one individual and six groups of category B and C trees, all of which would need to be removed to facilitate the development. The remaining trees that are located outside the site edge red but near the boundary would be retained and protected throughout the construction period, and then supplemented by a replacement tree planting scheme. All tree works should be carried out by a competent arborist in accordance with BS 3998:2010, Tree Work Recommendations.

In terms of the loss of the existing trees, the fact that the trees are offered no conservation protection or further protection through a TPO status and as such could be removed without any formal planning approval, must be given weight in the decision making process. The AIA states that compensation for the loss of

trees and the impact on canopy cover can be provided by way of planting new trees at the landscape stage of the project. Where applicable, opportunities for new planting are indicated on the drawings accompanying this report. Given the nature of the proposals, the context of the site in the local landscape and the opportunities for new planting and landscaping, it is considered that in terms of canopy cover, the medium to long term impact of the development will be neutral.

A fully detailed landscaping scheme has been submitted for consideration, which includes the planting of 10 new extra heavy standard trees, a total of 162 metres of new hedgerow, 15 different species of shrub plants, climbing plants to screen the required retaining walls, and 714 new herbaceous / perennial plants around the site. This is a significant increase and improvement over the existing planting at the site. The Arboricultural Officer notes the submitted reports and landscape proposals and subject to the inclusion of appropriately worded conditions raises no concerns about the development.

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

Impact on Protected Species and Ecology

It is noted that the site has no nature conservation designations, legal or otherwise, as listed in Stockport's Local Plan (e.g. Site of Biological Importance, Local Nature Reserve, Green Chain etc). It has however been identified as an opportunity area within the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) pilot study for Greater Manchester and there is an area of Green Chain 90m north east of the site boundary along the railway line. 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.

An Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey and daytime bat roost assessment survey were carried out in December 2021 (bEk Enviro Ltd, July 2022), a Bat Emergence Survey report by bEk Enviro Ltd (October 2023) and a Badger Walkover Survey bEk Enviro Ltd (June 2023) have been submitted in support of the application. The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Nature Development Officer are contained within the Consultee Responses section above.

A sufficient level of ecological surveys has now been undertaken for the proposed development. The Biodiversity Net Gain assessment indicates a net gain of at least 40% on the site which is acceptable as long as the hedgerows are planted, maintained and managed in a suitable manner which should be detailed in the Landscape and Environmental Management Plan or similar document with the accompanying Biodiversity Enhancements Plan.

The landscape strategy for the scheme should create structural diversity within proposed planting and aim to utilise a range of locally native wildlife-friendly species. It's noted that the landscape scheme has been updated to include a 401m hedge with a mix of native species (carpinus betulus, crataegus monogyna and ilex aquifolium) rather than single species which is welcomed.

Trees included in the landscape design comprise 7 no. non-native (pear, crab apple and serviceberry species) and 3 no. native trees (rowan and hawthorn). It

is noted that although the additional hawthorn and crab apple are non-native, they do provide benefits for wildlife including pollinators, butterflies and moths and birds.

The proposed site layout plan shows provision of a garden terrace and green roof on the proposed Roundhouse building which is welcomed. A wildflower meadow mix using Emorsgate EM6F is proposed and will be managed and maintained as per the 30 year monitoring plan to be submitted with this application. The landscape plan also includes walls with climbing plants which is a welcome use of vertical greenspace. These measures would be particularly welcomed given the designation of the site as an opportunity area within the LNRS for Greater Manchester and proximity of designated Green Chain.

The existing listed engine house building on the site has been confirmed as a bat roost during the 2023 surveys. The proposals would result in the destruction of a bat roost with the potential to kill or injure bats without appropriate mitigation and compensation measures. On this basis, the Council's Nature Development officer has confirmed that the proposals would result in the destruction of the bat roosts with the potential to kill or injure bats/ and damage their habitat without appropriate mitigation and compensation measures. As a result of this, a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) or a Bat Mitigation Class Licence will be required from Natural England.

When determining planning application where this is the case, the Council should have regard to the 3 Habitats Regulation derogation tests: -

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

In regards to the first two tests, the public benefits of the proposed development are outlined above in relation to heritage matters. The public benefits of the proposed development in this case are viewed as considerable, most notably that the proposal would provide 54 units of residential accommodation in a period of undersupply, reuse a vacant brownfield site in a highly accessible location close to the Town Centre with a development offering significant regenerative benefits to the locality. Due to the poor state of repair of the existing Listed Building and concerns over its long term future, there is also no satisfactory alternative solution in this case to the conversion of the building.

In terms of the favourable conservation status test: the submitted bEk Bat Report (2023) recommends a mitigation strategy including sensitive timing of works and soft strip of building. It should also include a toolbox talk, pre-works inspection survey, supervision of works by a licensed bat ecologist and provision of a bat box on site prior to demolition works commencing, along with sensitive measures during works to minimise disturbance. Implementation of these measures can be secured via condition and should ensure that the Favourable Conservation Status test is met.

In relation to the receipt of the necessary bat licence, a further condition has been recommended that states that the proposed works shall not commence until the local planning authority has been provided with either: -

- a) A licence issued by Natural England pursuant to Regulation 53 of the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2019 authorising the specified activity/development to go ahead; or
- b) A statement in writing from the relevant licensing body to the effect that it does not consider that the specified activity/developments will require a licence.

An informative has also been requested to make the applicant aware of the shelf life of survey data. Natural England usually accept bat survey data from the current and/or preceding survey season, so should works have not commenced by May 2025, update bat activity survey work will likely be required to inform the licence application.

In relation to birds, a condition is recommended to prevent any demolition or vegetation clearance during the bird breeding season, unless it can be demonstrated that no birds would be harmed and/or appropriate mitigation measures are in place to protect nesting birds.

To protect wildlife (including badgers) which may pass through the site and prevent potential disturbance during works any works, the submission of a further badger survey prior to the works commencing is requested to check the site for new mammal holes and to check the potential setts outside the site boundary. A condition requiring the adoption of Reasonable Avoidance Measures during the construction of the development are also recommended to be conditioned.

It is also recommended that any proposed lighting should be sensitively designed so as to minimise impacts on wildlife associated with light disturbance. In relation to biodiversity enhancements, further details in relation to bat and bird boxes and hedgehog gaps should be submitted for review and it is recommended that this can be secured by condition along with a proposed landscaping scheme.

No invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were recorded on site during the survey. A staghorn sumac tree was noted on site and whilst this is not a Schedule 9 listed species, it can be invasive and so the ecology report recommends measures to control its spread.

In view of the above, in the absence of objections from the Council Nature Development Officer and subject to the imposition of suitably worded planning conditions, the proposal is considered acceptable with regard to its impact on protected species, biodiversity and the ecological interest of the site, in accordance with Core Strategy DPD policy SIE-3.

Energy Efficiency

As the proposed development is for more than 10 residential units, it triggers the Council's carbon reduction targets, as defined by Core Strategy DPD policy SD-3. Therefore, an Energy Statement has been submitted in support of the application.

Following the initial concerns raised by the Council's Planning Policy officer in relation to energy and sustainability, the applicant provided an updated Statement in order to address the concerns raised. The information contained within the Statement provides further clarification in relation to the low energy design solutions proposed that limit carbon emissions in-line with the nationwide objective of achieving net zero carbon buildings.

The Energy Statement outlines that the proposed energy strategy for the proposed development is as follows:

1. Minimal heat loss through fabric, thermal bridging and air infiltration.
2. Installation of energy efficient building services such as high efficiency heating and high efficacy lighting.

3. Consider the integration of decentralised energy.
4. Explore renewable energy technology, if necessary (dependant on be lean savings), to further reduce grid-energy demand and CO2 emissions.

The Statement demonstrates that in accordance with Building Regulations Approved Document Part L (Volume 1: Dwellings) 2021, predicted Carbon Dioxide (CO2) emissions have been determined using Government approved SAP 10 2021 software by trained and accredited assessors. Results demonstrate that high carbon emission savings can be achieved through the design of a high-performance thermal envelope and building services specification. This has been proposed to incorporate low U-values, detailing to minimise thermal bridging and air infiltration, a highly efficient communal air source heat pump and controls. PV will be installed on the roof to further reduce carbon emissions. The resulting strategy achieves the required percentage CO2 savings.

A high-performance building envelope has been specified comprising low U-values, thermally efficient construction details and low air permeability. Performance values demonstrate improvement against that of the 2021 Notional building used for comparison in compliance assessment. This has shown that the development has achieved a carbon reduction of 13% site wide. This is above and beyond the Building Regulations Baseline compliance.

Furthermore, considering the fabric improvements. Heating energy consumption will be further reduced through the use of an energy efficient communal air source heat pump and Solar PV on the roof of the building. With this incorporated, this provides a green stage saving of 50% and a cumulative saving of 63% under the new 2021 Part L Building Regulations.

On this basis, an appropriately worded condition would be included in any approval decision that requires the submission of further details in relation to the above renewable technologies and how the development will meet both the Building Regulations and policy standards.

Fire Safety for Tall Buildings

Following the Grenfell Tower fire on 14 June 2017 the government commissioned the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety led by Dame Judith Hackitt. The report highlighted the need to transform the fire and building safety regime and recommended that “some minimum requirements around fire safety will need to be addressed when local planning authorities are determining planning applications and will require input from those with the relevant expertise.”

Government made a commitment in ‘A reformed building safety regulatory system: government response to the ‘Building a Safer Future’ consultation’ to introduce planning gateway one. Planning gateway one has two key elements:

- to require the developer to submit a fire statement setting out fire safety considerations specific to the development with a relevant application for planning permission for development which involves one or more relevant buildings, and
- to establish the Health and Safety Executive as a statutory consultee for relevant planning applications

Relevant buildings

- contain two or more dwellings or educational accommodation and

- meet the height condition of 18m or more in height, or 7 or more storeys

This application is for an 8 storey building and as such, the above is applicable in this case. On this basis, the application has been submitted with a Fire Statement, which includes information such as the principles, concepts and approach relating to fire safety that have been applied to each building in the development, the site layout and emergency vehicle access and water supplies for firefighting purposes.

As outlined above, the Health and Safety Executive are a statutory consultee in this case and they have fully assessed the submitted Fire Statement and plans for the proposed development. The consultation response from the HSE is summarised above and can be seen in full on the public portal. Following amendments to the Fire Statement originally submitted, the HSE have now confirmed that it is content with the fire safety design as set out in the project description, to the extent it affects land use planning considerations.

There are some matters that have been raised by the HSE that the applicant will need to address prior to any construction, however these are to comply with later regulatory stages and do not need to be addressed as part of the assessment of the planning application.

Land Contamination

A Phase 1 Contaminated Land Report has been completed by BEK and has been submitted to accompany the application. The report states there are significant pollutant linkages that need investigating due to the historic railway use legacy.

The detailed comments received to the application from the Council Environment Team are contained within the consultee responses section above. It is recommended that the undertaking of the necessary reports for soil and gas are completed before the development commences. As such, it is recommended that conditions are imposed, to require the submission, approval and implementation of an investigation, risk assessment, remediation scheme and remedial action into potential land contamination at the site.

Subject to compliance with such conditions, it is considered that the proposed development would not be at risk from land contamination or landfill gas migration, in accordance with Core Strategy DPD policies CS8 and SIE-3.

Flood Risk and Drainage

Saved Policy EP1.7, Development and Flood Risk, controls development to require that any proposal is not at risk of flooding, does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere, does not hinder access to watercourses, does not result in the loss of the flood plain or result in extensive culverting, affect existing flood defences, or significantly increase surface water runoff. This accords with Paragraphs 163 - 167 of the NPPF, which relates to ensuring any planning application ensure vulnerable uses are located within the lowest areas of risk, and that proposals are flood resilient.

A summary of the comments received to the application from the Council Drainage Engineer/Lead Local Flood Authority are contained within the Consultee Responses section above.

A Preliminary Drainage Strategy prepared by BEK Enviro has been submitted to accompany this planning application. This outlines that infiltration testing has been undertaken at the site in June 2023 by Bek Enviro and standing water was observed within the base of the trial pits excavated on site and the infiltration testing was deemed to have failed due to the slow infiltration rate at the site. As such the use of infiltration methods is not considered suitable for surface water disposal at the site. According to the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning, there are no watercourses within the vicinity of the proposed development site in which surface water disposal would be viable.

Within the preliminary drainage strategy, flows from the proposed building roof areas are collected via rainwater down pipes, with flows from the access road/car parking contained within permeable paving. Surface water flows should be directed to the 225/750 public combined sewer within Stitch Lane, following consent from United Utilities. Modelling the preliminary drainage strategy discharging to sewer showed that permeable paving covering all the access road and car parking area (0.133Ha), using a depth of 0.500m of sub-base and a discharge rate of 2.2l/s by means of a hydro brake or pump (if required) had sufficient capacity to contain flows during the 100 year + 40% climate change event. The apartment roof will be partially green roof and therefore provide a level of evapotranspiration for the first 5mm of rainfall. Water butts should also be included to allow for the reuse rainwater throughout the site.

In relation to the proposed surface water drainage strategy for the site, there have been detailed negotiations between the Drainage Engineer/Lead Local Flood Authority and the applicant's drainage consultant. As can be seen from the LLFA consultation responses outlined above, the LLFA recommends that the application is acceptable in principle subject to a detailed design. Therefore, on this basis, it is considered that the appropriate drainage of the development could be secured by conditional control. This would require the submission, approval and implementation of an appropriate surface water drainage system; and management and maintenance of such a drainage system at all times thereafter.

Subject to compliance with such conditions, 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.

Noise and Air Quality

Due to the location of the proposed development between Wellington Road North to the east and the Railway line to the west and the proximity to existing residential properties, a Noise Assessment completed by RS Acoustic Engineering has been submitted to accompany the application.

In relation to new receptors, the report assesses the impact of existing noise levels on the occupiers of the proposed development. The observations on site indicated that the main noise contributions were associated with the road traffic on Wellington Road North to the east and rail traffic on the railway line to the west. Aircraft noise was also considered, however it was confirmed that the site does not fall within an area affected by aircraft noise under UDP Policy EP1.10 'Aircraft Noise' in the control of new development.

From the collation of representative noise level data for the site and taking into account the internal noise design criteria, the consultant has recommended a noise insulation scheme: acoustic mitigated window specification and ventilation strategy. The report recommends noise mitigation measures at section 4, designed to achieve BS 8233: 2014 and WHO guidelines; to ensure that future occupants are not adversely affected by transportation noise sources.

For all habitable rooms, a mechanically assisted ventilation system has been recommended by the acoustic consultant. In terms of the external amenity areas (balconies, roof gardens, ground level areas) BS8233:2014 recognises that in higher noise areas, such as city centres or urban areas adjoining the strategic transport network, a higher level of noise is acceptable. In this case, acoustic barriers are recommended for the balconies and roof gardens to achieve an ambient sound level within balconies and gardens of the upper guideline value of 55 dB LAeq,16hour.

Finally, the development has been assessed in relation to vibrations from the railway. The results of the assessment are within the Vibration Dose Value covered by BS 6472-1:2008, indicating that there is less than a low probability of adverse comment during the daytime and night-time period. Therefore, on this basis, adverse comment in relation to vibration impacts is not expected.

As such, it can be concluded that noise and vibration should not be a barrier to residential development at this location. The Council's EHO has considered this report and agrees with the conclusions in relation to the protection of the future occupiers of the proposed development.

In relation to the potential impacts of the development on the existing residents within the area, conditions and informatives are recommended in relation to construction and demolition operational hours and the submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan, which would cover issues such as noise, dust management and a pile foundation method statement.

In relation to Air Quality, an Air Quality Assessment completed by Hydrock has been submitted to accompany the application. This report considers whether the proposed development could significantly change air quality during the construction phase and occupation phases.

The report concludes that a qualitative construction dust risk assessment has been undertaken in line with IAQM guidance. The assessment has determined that the construction of the Proposed Development would be 'Low Risk' for nuisance dust soiling effects. However, through implementing the IAQM's highly recommended mitigation measures for Low Risk sites (into a Dust Management Plan / CEMP), as provided at Appendix D of this report, the risks of construction phase impacts on the local area should be reduced to Negligible.

In line with EPUK & IAQM guidance an assessment of the impact of the Proposed Development on local air quality is not required as the additional development generated traffic does not exceed the EPUK & IAQM thresholds for detailed assessment and therefore the impact of the Proposed Development on local air quality will likely be not significant. The measures in the FTP that promote sustainable travel will act to further reduce any impact of air quality from the Proposed Development. Furthermore, space heating and DHW for the residential units will be provided by a high efficiency Communal ASHP. This is

beneficial in terms of air quality as they do not introduce any new combustion sources or processes.

In line with EPUK & IAQM guidance detailed dispersion modelling, using ADMS-Urban, has been performed to assess the potential exposure of future residential receptors at the Site to poor air quality. This modelling has used 2019 backgrounds and EFT factors to ensure a conservative assessment. The modelling assessment has shown that the exposure of future receptors at the Site, for NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}, should not be an issue for planning. No exceedances of the relevant AQALs were identified within the Site.

The submitted assessment was considered by the EHO and it has been confirmed that they are happy with its findings and conclusions subject to a suitably worded condition being included to ensure that the mitigation measures outlined are followed.

Therefore, on the basis of the above, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable and in compliance with Core Strategy DPD policies CS8 and SIE-3 and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

Designing out Crime

Policies H1 and SIE1 of the Core Strategy together with para 130 of the NPPF seek to ensure that developments create safe living conditions. The applicant is required to include a Crime Impact Statement (CIS) with the application. This report is compiled by GMP Design for Security who then offer their comments on the proposals in this respect once the application is submitted.

In responding to the application, GMP advise that they have no objection to the application subject to compliance with the CIS. The recommended security measures are outlined within the consultations section above.

On this basis, the proposed development by reason of its design and layout will minimise the opportunity for criminal behaviour and as such accords with policies H1 and SIE1 of the Core Strategy together with para 130 of the NPPF.

CONCLUSION

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 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF indicates that these should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.

The location of the site is within a Predominantly Residential Area and as referred to at the start of this analysis, the fact that the Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing means that elements of Core Strategy policies CS4 and H2 are considered to be out of date. As such the tilted balance in favour of the residential redevelopment of the site as set out in para 11 of the NPPF is engaged. The application site predominantly comprises a brownfield site in an accessible area and the redevelopment of the site for residential purposes is also in accordance with para 118 of the NPPF which places substantial weight upon the use of brownfield land within settlements for homes and supporting opportunities to remediate derelict land.

The Grade II Listed Building at the site has fallen into significant disrepair and the proposed new apartment block would ensure the retention, renovation, and future use of this important building, whilst also providing the benefit of much needed residential accommodation in the Borough. It is acknowledged that the proposed apartment block over 8 floors is a substantial height that would have an impact on the setting of the Listed building. However, the public benefits from the scheme as a whole by opening up views of the listed building from Wellington Road North and the long term use of the structure and the key contribution this will make to transformational regeneration of this vacant site must be given significant weight.

It is considered that the siting, scale and design of the proposed development could be successfully accommodated on the site without causing undue harm to the visual amenity of the area or the residential amenity of surrounding 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 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, notwithstanding the fact that approval of the development would constitute a departure from the development plan, the proposal is considered to represent sustainable development. On this basis, notwithstanding the objection 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 SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS AND S106 AGREEMENT

Should Members agree the recommendation, the application should be referred to the Planning and Highways Regulation Committee for determination as a departure from the Development Plan.