

Application No: 11/0268M

Location: FORMER YESTERDAYS NIGHTCLUB, HARDEN PARK, ALDERLEY EDGE, SK9 7QN

Proposal: EXTENSION, REFURBISHMENT AND ALTERATION OF THE FORMER YESTERDAYS NIGHT CLUB, HARDEN PARK, ALDERLEY EDGE TO CREATE A 68 BED HOTEL WITH GROUND FLOOR BISTRO AND SPA TOGETHER WITH ASSOCIATED CAR PARKING FOR 79 CAR PARKING SPACES, LANDSCAPING AND ASSOCIATED WORKS

Applicant: Towerbeg Ltd

Expiry Date: 07-Jul-2011

Date Report Prepared: 9 September 2011

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

MAIN ISSUES

- Compliance with Green Belt policy and are there any very special circumstances that would justify the inappropriate development
- Are there any material considerations which would outweigh the harm caused by reason of inappropriateness
- Ecological Impact
- Impact on residential amenity
- Highway safety and accessibility
- Design and layout
- Assessment of viability
- Sequential Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment

REASON FOR REPORT

The proposal requires determination by the Northern Planning Committee under the terms of the Council's constitution.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The site lies in the North Cheshire Green Belt and is located off a private road known as Harden Park. The site is within the buffer zone between Alderley Edge and Wilmslow and is located circa 300 m north of the village envelope of Alderley Edge and circa 500m south of Wilmslow. This access is shared by a small number of private dwellings. The County Hotel is located opposite. Ryleys School playing fields, where an all weather pitch is currently being

developed lies adjacent to the north. The grounds within which the buildings sit have become rather overgrown and the site is sloping away towards the rear by circa 3.5m. A lake is located within the grounds beyond which is the slightly elevated Wilmslow to Alderley Edge/ West Coast main railway line. The existing building on the site is an imposing Victorian villa that was formerly in use as a small hotel (circa 6/8 bedrooms with a basement nightclub, some outbuildings (mews style) that appear to have been used in connection with the former hotel use. Overall, gross internal floorspace is submitted as being 3000 sq m. The building itself is in a run down condition and has been vacant for a considerable period of time. The building lies in spacious grounds with a large garden areas to the north and west of the buildings. Mature woodland exists to the south and very good boundary screening exists along the north, west and southern boundaries. Several residential properties are located adjacent to the north and northeast boundary of the site; these properties have rear gardens that adjoin the site.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

The proposal involves the demolition of rear extensions and upper parts of the main hotel building, the removal of outbuildings and disused swimming pool to the rear of the existing hotel. This demolition work will facilitate the redevelopment of the building via the extension of the main frontage building incorporating an additional second floor, the erection of a 3 storey rear/side extension and external terrace to that building, and associated works within the grounds, including a replacement bat barn as mitigation for the loss of habitat within the roof of the hotel and a ramped access to an underground car park. Overall, the extensions and conversion works will contain 68 spa hotel bedrooms and supporting accommodation such as kitchen, dining room, bar, lobby, external terraces, a basement gym, pool, spa treatment rooms and an underground car park for circa 45 cars, surface level parking for 34 cars, a bat barn and pontoon by the pond.

RELEVANT HISTORY

The site has a long planning history, much of which is not relevant to the determination of this application

02/2741P Demolition and site clearance of existing buildings and erection of 18 no. Detached dwellings (outline planning) - Refused 02/04/2003

02/0340P Use Of Part Car Park And Erection Of A Portacabin For Office Use In Association With 24 Hour Taxi Business Refused 29/08/2002

17664P Extension To Hotel To Provide Luxury Suites - Planning permission granted 30/04/1979

POLICY

The Development Plan consists of the North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (RSS), the saved policies of the Structure Plan Alteration: Cheshire 2016, and the saved policies of the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan.

Regional Spatial Strategy

Relevant policies of the RSS include: DP1 Spatial Principles; DP2 Promote Sustainable Communities; DP3 Promote Sustainable Economic Development; DP4 make the Best Use of Existing Resources and Infrastructure; DP5 Manage Travel Demand - Reduce the Need to Travel, and Increase Accessibility; DP7 Promote Environmental Quality; DP9 Reduce Emissions and Adapt to Climate Change; RDF 2 Rural Areas; ; W1 Strengthening the Regional Economy; W7 Tourist Attractions; RT2 Managing Travel Demand; RT9 Walking and Cycling; EM1 Integrated Enhancement and Protection of the Region's Environmental Assets; EM3 Green Infrastructure; EM16 Energy Conservation and Efficiency; EM18 Decentralised Energy Supply; MCR3 Southern Part of the Manchester City Region.

Of the remaining saved Structure Plan policies, only policy T7: Parking is of relevance.

Cheshire Replacement Waste Local Plan (Adopted 2007)

Policy 10 (Minimising Waste during Construction and Development)

Policy 11 (Development and waste recycling)

Local Plan Policy

Relevant policies of the Local Plan include: NE11 relating to nature conservation; GC1 New build in the Green Belt; BE1 Design Guidance; RT13 Tourism; DC1 Design; DC3 Residential Amenity; DC6 Circulation and Access; DC8 Landscaping; DC9 Tree Protection; DC17 and DC18 Water Resources; T3 Pedestrians; T4 Access for people with restricted mobility; and T5 Provision for Cyclists.

Other Material Considerations

National policy guidance set out in PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development, Planning and Climate Change Supplement to PPS1; PPG2: Green Belts, PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth, PPS9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation, PPG13 Transport; the Good Practise Guide on Tourism (2006), are of most relevance to this development proposal.

Ministerial Statement March 2011 – Planning for Growth

Draft National Planning Policy Framework

Circulars of most relevance include: ODPM 06/2005 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation; ODPM 05/2005 Planning Obligations; 11/2005 Green Belt Direction and 11/95 The use of Conditions in Planning Permissions.

Relevant legislation also includes the EC Habitats Directive, the Conservation of Habitats Regulations and Species Regulations 2010, Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Manchester Airport: No objection from the perspective of aerodrome safeguarding subject to conditions

Strategic Highways Manager: No highway objections subject to conditions. Has considered the framework Travel Plan submitted and considers it to be acceptable

Environment Health Officer : No objections subject to conditions

United Utilities: No objection subject to drainage being on a separate system

Cheshire East Visitor Economy : Offers general observations about the nature of tourism within Cheshire East. Generally supports the application since it will add to visitor facilities within the region.

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS

A very detailed letter of objection has been submitted by a Planning Consultant on behalf of the group of residents adjoining the site. The full submission can be viewed online. The objections are summarised as:

- The development is contrary to local plan policies and national guidance
- The proposal amounts to inappropriate development in the Green Belt and there are no very special circumstances
- It would be detrimental to the openness of the Green Belt contributing to its erosion, contrary to PPG2
- The site being circa approx 1km from the centre of Alderley Edge is an unsustainable location
- The use is a main town centre use which requires a sequential site selection. That undertaken is inadequate, only 3 sites in Wilmslow, Prestbury and Alderley Edge have been submitted and little evidence to justify why those 3 have been discounted
- The proposal is contrary to the advice of PPS4
- The creation of the jobs generated does not outweigh the harm caused

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The application forms and plans are accompanied by a planning statement; transport statement; arboricultural statement; ecological surveys; design and access statement; a tourism report, landscape visual impact assessment and a development appraisal and viability report. These documents can all be viewed on the file online as background papers. The planning statement concludes:

The proposals:

- Are an inappropriate development but there are very special circumstances that justify the proposal
- Comprises a rear extension which is a modern design to compliment the existing building without competing with it and extends the existing building without being a pastiche
- The no of bedrooms is needed to provide the financial return necessary to make the scheme viable.
- Is a sustainable economic development set out in the Government's Supplement to PPS4 and they meet a significant need for tourism facilities in the locality; the site is accessible by a choice of means of transport.
- The scale of development is needed in viability terms – if not developed at the desired scale ' the site will simply be left to continue to decline and present a poor visual impact in the local area..' (P.50 Planning Statement)
- It is forecast to generate 66 jobs
- Will be very well screened within the landscape

These considerations are put forward to outweigh any harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness. The applicant considers significant weight should be given to the fact that the site is in a sustainable location and this will, in his opinion, bring forward sustainable economic development.

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Section 38 of the Planning and Compensation Act 2004 requires a plan led approach to decision making in that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In this case the development plan consists the saved policies of the North West of England Plan (Regional Spatial Strategy), the Cheshire structure Plan, the Cheshire Replacement Waste Local Plan and the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan.

Principle of Development and Policy

The site lies in the North Cheshire Green Belt. New buildings and materials changes in the use of land are strictly controlled within the Green Belt as advised in national guidance PPG2 and Local Plan policy GC1. The proposed development falls to be considered as inappropriate development in the Green Belt as defined by PPG2 and Local Plan policy GC1, as the proposal does not meet any of the exception criteria.

Inappropriate development is, the by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. There is a general presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt, and very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other material considerations.

Before assessing any considerations put forward by the Applicant as the 'very special circumstances' necessary to justify the development, it is important for Members to evaluate any additional harm arising for the proposed development by reason of its inappropriateness.

The proposed building would have a floorspace over 6 times greater than the existing building on the site, and would increase the amount of building from approximately 1000 sq m to over 6000 sq m.

The existing building has a maximum height of approx 10.6 metres at its highest point; the proposed extension to the roof will result in an extended frontage building that would have a maximum datum height approximately 2 metres higher than the existing building for the full frontage of circa 24 metres width. The proposed extension which would be to the side and rear and continue for a distance of circa 76 metres to the rear of the existing building and comprise basement car park, ground, external terraces and 2 upper floors of hotel rooms, however the footprint and bulk of the proposed building would be significantly greater than the existing building, and in real terms the height of the building would be greater due to the variation in ground levels away extending into the site, for instance the height of the extension is 14 metres.

In addition to the mass of the proposed building and the proposed extension it is also proposed to have a large basement area with a landscaped terrace above, as well as the formalised car park to the front of the building. The resultant development in terms of footprint, floorspace and mass would involve a significant erosion of openness of the site and would also dramatically alter the character and spacious setting of the site. Openness is the most important attribute of the Green Belt and therefore significant weight should be afforded to this loss of openness.

In terms of visual amenity from outside the site, the site benefits from very good mature screening from public vantage points in the wider landscape. Views of the development would therefore be reduced to glimpses through the trees and shrubs in the summertime but as the trees surrounding the site are generally deciduous, the scale/bulk/massing and incongruous design of this development would be visible from the wider area/ main road during the winter months. The Visual Impact Assessment submitted in support of this application was undertaken in the summer-time, no such similar assessment has been submitted in respect of the winter months, however, given the deciduous nature of the foliage within and surrounding the site, the harm to visual amenity from public vantage points is considered to be much greater in the winter months; and importantly given the increased bulk, scale, massing and site coverage of the extension even the glimpsed vantage points though tree belts would offer a noticeable reduction in openness of the site.

In order to justify the inappropriate development within the Green Belt it will be necessary to consider if the harm caused by reason of inappropriateness and any other harms outweighed by other considerations.

These are now considered below;

Design and site layout

Local Plan policies BE1, H2, H13 and DC1 address matters of design and appearance. Policy BE1 states that the Council will promote high standards of design and new development should reflect local character, use appropriate materials and respect form, layout, siting, scale and design of surrounding buildings and their setting.

Attention is drawn to such matters as materials, height and mass. Guidance in PPS1 seeks to ensure that new developments take opportunities to enhance the characters and distinctiveness of places.

In design terms, the scheme has two distinct elements, these being the roof extension of the existing building to create an additional floor of accommodation and the side/rear extension.

The roof extension utilises the same design treatment as the existing building with dormers in the extended roof, utilises the same buff brick and slate roofing materials.

The proposed rear extension is a significant structure in its own right and is of a height, scale, length and mass that literally overwhelms the existing Victorian Villa. The design treatment is, in addition, a modern treatment, which utilises render, flats roof and curved walls and glazed balconies as well and timber cladding which has an uncomfortable juxtaposition with the traditional detailing of the existing building.

The sheer mass and scale of the proposed extensions to this building, which erodes the Victorian Villa character of the site and this, combined with the alteration of grounds levels and inappropriate, the incongruous and alien and excessively bulky design result in a building which is not considered to be sympathetic to the site, or the surroundings, and which is contrary to policies BE1, DC1 and national guidance in PPS1.

Policy EM18 of the RSS requires new development, including extensions, over 1000 sq m to secure at least 10% of their predicted energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources, unless it can be demonstrated that it is not feasible or viable. The information submitted infers to a high energy efficiency of the proposed building, with solar panels, air source and ground source heat pumps, rainwater harvesting are amongst the green energy initiatives which are being evaluated by the Applicant with the potential for a BREAM rating of 'very good'. This is to be welcomed, but renewable energy requirements are not sufficiently addressed and therefore more information would be required in this respect.

Overall, it is considered the scheme fails to deliver design to a sufficient standard to comply with the design policy in the Plan or the policy as expressed in other material considerations.

PPS4 Sequential Assessment and Need for the scale of the Development

Hotels are listed as town centre uses in paragraph 7. Therefore the town centre policies in PPS4 are relevant to this application. The main thrust of PPS4 in relation to uses listed in paragraph 7 is that they should be located in town centres first. Then only if there are no suitable sites available, should edge of centre sites be considered. Out-of-town centre sites are the least sequentially preferable.

A PPS4 Sequential Assessment undertaken by the Applicant.

This is considered to be a weak sequential analysis that only looks at three sites in the local area. It is noted that a site in Wilmslow town centre and a site in Alderley Edge district centre and a none specified site in Prestury have been reviewed and discounted. This is as far as the Applicant's catchment area goes.

Whilst the outcome of the assessments on these sites is not disputed, the area of 'need' as submitted in the Sequential Assessment is stated to be within Cheshire. The demand generators for the hotel are spread out within a 28 mile radius of Alderley Edge. The applicant considers the local market to be within 15-20 minutes drive time (this would encompass Didsbury, other parts of South Manchester, Altrincham, Hazel Grove, Knutsford, Wilmslow, Congleton, Holmes Chapel, Sandbach and beyond). The catchment market that the proposed development would serve therefore covers large parts of north Cheshire and south Manchester. However, none of these areas have been sequentially assessed by the Applicant

The sequential analysis should also demonstrate flexibility in terms of scale, format and car parking provision. No such flexibility has been demonstrated.

Policy EC17 of PPS4 states that proposals for town centre uses not located in an existing town centre and not in accordance with an up to date development should be refused planning permission where (inter alia) the applicant has failed to demonstrate compliance with the sequential approach (as expressed within Policy EC15 of PPS4)

The need for an adequate and rigorous assessment is particularly important because a key issue, particularly in the light of recent Governmental advise; in determining the application is whether very special circumstances exist to clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm to the Development Plan. That is to say, that if a local, over-riding need for the economic/tourist offer is identified, greater weight may be accorded to that need if the applicant could demonstrate that the need could not be met elsewhere at sequentially preferable sites. A more robust Sequential Assessment has not been forthcoming.

Ecology

The proposal involves significant works to the roof of the existing building, which involve the removal of the roof and the insertion of an upper floor.

The EC Habitats Directive 1992 requires the UK to maintain a system of strict protection for protected species and their habitats. The Directive only allows disturbance, or deterioration or destruction of breeding sites or resting places,

- in the interests of public health and public safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment and provided that there is:
- no satisfactory alternative and
- no detriment to the maintenance of the species population at favourable conservation status in their natural range.

The UK implemented the Directive by introducing The Conservation (Natural Habitats etc) Regulations 1994 which contain two layers of protection:

- a requirement on Local Planning Authorities (“LPAs”) to have regard to the Directive’s requirements above, and
- a licensing system administered by Natural England.

Local Plan Policy NE11 seeks to protect the interests of nature conservation.

Circular 6/2005 advises LPAs to give due weight to the presence of protected species on a development site to reflect EC requirements. “This may potentially justify a refusal of planning permission.”

PPS9 (2005) advises LPAs to ensure that appropriate weight is attached to protected species “Where granting planning permission would result in significant harm [LPAs] will need to be satisfied that the development cannot reasonably be located on any alternative site that would result in less or no harm. In the absence of such alternatives [LPAs] should ensure that, before planning permission is granted, adequate mitigation measures are put in place. Where ... significant harm ... cannot be prevented or adequately mitigated against, appropriate compensation measures should be sought. If that significant harm cannot be prevented, adequately mitigated against, or compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.”

PPS9 encourages the use of planning conditions or obligations where appropriate and again advises [LPAs] to “refuse permission where harm to the species or their habitats would result unless the need for, and benefits of, the development clearly outweigh that harm.” The converse of this advice is that if issues of detriment to the species, satisfactory alternatives and public interest seem likely to be satisfied, no impediment to planning permission arises under the Directive and Regulations.

The Council’s nature conservation officer has advised that two relatively common and widespread bat species have been confirmed as roosting within the former night club building. It also appears likely that a third uncommon bat species is present.

Two bat species are likely to be using the building in a transitory manner, however one species is thought to be using the building as a maternity roost. This roost must therefore be considered as being of significant nature conservation value.

In the absence of mitigation the proposed development would have a significant adverse impact on bats due to the loss of the roosts and the risk of killing or injuring any bats present when the works are undertaken.

The ecological report submitted in support of this application recommends the creation of a 'bat barn' within the grounds and the installation of bat boxes as a means of compensating for the loss of the roost. It also recommends the timing and supervision of the works to reduce the risk posed to any bats that may be present when the works are undertaken. A replacement bat barn is submitted, however, no details have been submitted. The information has been requested and will be the subject of an update to Committee.

Bats are a European protected species and as such the local planning authority has a statutory duty in the way it determines planning applications that may affect their habitat and resting place under the EC Habitats Directives.

In addition to being a material consideration regulation 9(5) the 2010 Habitats Regulations places an obligation upon planning authorities to give consideration to bats (and other European protected species) in the exercise of their functions. The recent 'Wooley' and 'Morge' judicial reviews have clarified the position of planning authorities in respect of this legislation.

In this instance, it is not considered that there is an over-riding public interest in favour of this development, given the number of contraventions of planning policy. On this basis, and following the 'Wooley' and 'Morge' clarification of the law, Natural England would not be able to grant a licence for derogation of the legislation in this instance and for this reason this application as a matter of law can only be refused planning permission.

In addition, other protected species (Great Crested Newts and Badgers) are noted within the Ecological Assessment as potentially being present and affected by the proposed development. The submitted ecological assessment recommends that further surveys are undertaken in respect of these species. In addition the Nature Conservation Officer has also requested a barn owl survey be undertaken. No surveys for these species have been submitted by the applicant and the presence/absence of these species each of which is an material consideration is unknown.

Accordingly, in addition to this scheme being unable to justify a Natural England Licence to effect works to the existing roost, there is insufficient supporting information with regard to Badgers, Great Crested Newts and Barn Owls. Great Crested Newts are a European protected species and their presence on site may require further consideration to be given to the Habitat Regulations.

Although not European protected species further information is also required to establish the presence of Badgers and Barn Owls, prior to granting any planning permission.

Landscape and trees

The landscape impact from public vantage points outside the site is limited due to the ground levels and good screening of the site with mature trees. An arboriculture statement has been submitted with the application and an assessment of this from the Council's officer for arboriculture has raised no objection to the loss of a considerable number of trees.

There are a considerable number of mature trees within the site and around the boundaries so apart from a partial view of the existing building from the A34 and Harden Park, within the landscape the site is very well screened during the summer months.

The boundary tree belts are deciduous and are not particularly deep (one row on the northern and southern boundaries and one or two rows on the eastern boundary plus some lower level lakeside vegetation). The development would involve the removal of internal trees and hedges, including a tall coniferous hedge between the site and the A34, so the large scale hotel building would be visible to some extent through the boundary trees during the winter, particularly during the late afternoon and evening when the hotel and the gardens were lit up.

The Assessment also fails to consider the visual impact of the development on the three residential properties immediately surrounding to the site – Harden Lodge, the Grange and Breeze. Occupiers of residential properties are considered highly sensitive receptors. The sheer scale, height and length of the extension to the rear, will dominate the landscape setting for the neighbours.

Harden Lodge is well screened by a wall, trees and evergreen shrubbery and the proposed development would be unlikely to have a visual impact on this property. The development would however have a significant visual impact on the Grange and to a lesser extent the adjoining property, Breeze (there is no boundary feature between their gardens). There is currently a single row of large, mature deciduous trees along the southern garden boundary of the Grange which would screen the development quite well (but not completely) when in full leaf. During the winter the three storey hotel would be visible from principal windows on the ground floor and the first floor of the Grange and from the patio and rear garden of the Grange and Breeze.

Highways

The Strategic Highways Manager has not raised objections to the proposal. Based on the technical assessment of the highways officer, the impact of the proposal on highway safety is considered to be acceptable.

In terms of public transport provision, bus services operate from Wilmslow town centre and the nearest railway station is at Alderley Edge within a reasonable walking distance (circa 800m away), with services to Wilmslow, Manchester, the local network and the west coast main line.

The site is therefore in a fairly accessible location to a choice of means of transport and accessible to a variety of services by foot in Alderley Edge. In addition, there is a weekday

half hourly bus service operating along Wilmslow Road to Macclesfield and Wilmslow and within easy walking distance of the site. The proposed car parking spaces are deemed to be appropriate for the site in highways terms based on the numbers of proposed hotel bedrooms and the spa, gym and fine dining facilities that are likely to be utilised by visitors who may not be staying at the proposed hotel. In accessibility terms the site is considered to be in a relatively sustainable location with a choice of means of transport being easily accessible to workers and visitors alike. However, it is also recognised that the likely target market for patrons of the proposed facility are unlikely to travel to this site by means other than the private car.

Residential amenity

The existing layout of the site includes a number of two storey outbuildings/ disused swimming pool which immediately adjoin the boundary with the most affected property to the north of the site. The proposed rear extension will be comprise 4 storeys overall including the basement car park, pool and spa/gym. The 2 upper floors will comprise a significant number of rooms overlooking the shared rear garden of the Breeze and 'The Grange'. The rear extension itself complies with distance standards set out in policy DC38 and sufficient separation distance exists with the rear elevations of those properties, such that there would be no detrimental loss of light. However, the mass of the proposed structure is close to the boundary of the property and its immediate neighbour. This is considered to have a significantly detrimental impact to the outlook from those properties and importantly increase their sense of enclosure from and would result in a harmful injury to amenity. The impact on the immediate neighbour 'The Grange' is considered to be particularly deleterious in terms of over-bearingness and loss of outlook. Whilst there is mature boundary landscaping to the effected boundary within 'The Grange' this is unlikely to be effective during the winter months. Noise and disturbance from the ramped basement car park access and hotel service area which is immediately adjoining the boundary must also be considered, whilst the lawful use of the property is as a nightclub and the scheme involves the removal of a number of outbuildings away from the boundary, no noise survey data is available that would demonstrate that the activities within the proposed service yard for a building of this scale will not introduce an overly intensive and noisy series of activities to the rear area. In terms of privacy, it is considered that there would not be any undue degree of overlooking from the building due to the angle between the buildings and existing private amenity space. However, for the reasons outlined it is considered that there would be a significant loss of residential amenity as a result of the rear extension contrary to policy DC3 of the Local Plan.

Flood Risk Assessment

Information submitted by the Applicant indicates that a Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken, however, none has been received. On this basis, insufficient information has been submitted. Without adequate information this must be an additional reason to refuse this application.

REQUIRED HEADS OF TERMS

No draft heads of terms have been submitted with the application. However, the transport statement does supply a draft framework document for a travel plan if approved the proposal would require a legal agreement for the operation of a travel plan :

- Travel plan and monitoring costs

CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION

There are benefits, namely the contribution to tourism, the re-use of a derelict site within a reasonably accessible location and the economic benefits that would be generated as a result of this proposal.

However, the proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt and as such very special circumstances must be demonstrated to justify the development. Very special circumstances will only exist if the harm by reason of inappropriate development and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations in favour of the proposals. The additional harm identified that would result from the development is significant in terms of loss of openness, harm to the character and appearance of the site, poor design, harm to and insufficient information in respect of impact on European Protected Species and other species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act,. The proposed development would be contrary to policies GC1, DC1, DC3, RT13, S2, BE1 and NE11 of the Macclesfield Borough Local Plan and policies DP1, DP2, DP5, DP7, DP9, RT2, RT9 and EM1 of the Regional Spatial Strategy. The proposal has not be adequately assessed in terms of the sequential assessment. As such the application is recommended for refusal.

If Members were minded to approve this application, they are reminded that under the terms of the Green Belt Direction 2005, the application would need to be referred to the Secretary of State.

Application for Full Planning

RECOMMENDATION: Refuse for the following reasons

1. Contrary to Local Plan policies
2. Insufficient ecological information
3. Development unneighbourly
4. Insufficient information on Flood Risk
5. Adverse impact upon nature conservation interests
6. Inappropriate development in the Green Belt
7. Inadequate sequential assessment

