**Application:** 17/00978/FUL  |  **Township:** Rochdale  |  **Ward:** Bamford

**Applicant:** Mr Chris Grieves  |  **Agent:** AJ Cocker Associates

**Site Address:** Stable Hills, Chadwick Hall Road, Rochdale, OL11 4DJ

**Proposal:** Erection of detached dwelling

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## SITE LOCATION

![Site Location Map](image-url)
DELEGATION

1.1 This application is referred to the Planning and Licensing Committee following referral by the Head of Planning Services.

PROPOSAL SUMMARY

2.1 Full planning permission is sought for the erection of a detached dwelling.

RECOMMENDATION

3.1 It is recommended that the Planning and Licensing Committee resolves to GRANT planning permission subject to conditions.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

4.1 The proposed development would provide a high quality contemporary dwelling in a sustainable location. However, when viewed from the Roch Valley to the south of the site the development would be viewed in the same context as the Grade II listed building, Hill House. The significance of Hill House lies in its status as a seventeenth century farmhouse and this includes the rural setting of the farmhouse and the view across the valley.

4.2 The proposed development would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of Hill House and this harm attracts considerable importance and weight in determining the application. Paying special regard to the desirability of preserving its setting, it is however considered that the less than substantial harm to the setting would be outweighed by the public benefits associated with the development, namely in the development of a high quality and higher value property that would meet the aspirations of the Council’s Housing Strategy 2017-2022. The application is therefore in accordance with the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.
SITE

The application relates to land to the south of Stable Hills which is a detached property located off Chadwick Hall Road. The application site slopes down steeply to the south and prior to the application being submitted it was cleared of vegetation. The site also includes a strip of land that would run to the north and west of the existing property – Stable Hills to provide access into the site.

To the south the site overlooks an area of open land and the River Roch. The open land is designated as a Greenspace Corridor under the Council’s saved UDP Proposals Map and it includes agricultural land and a former water treatment works. The Springfield Park Golf Club is located to the south west bank of the River Roch and vegetation runs along the banks of the river.

Adjacent to the application site, to the immediate west of Stable Hills, is a Grade II listed property, Hill House. The listing description for the property reads:

“House. “IH 1609” on door lintel. Dressed with stone with C20 render and roof tiles. 3 unit hearth-passage plan with two storeys throughout, a C20 crosswing to the right, porch and a garage extension, and parallel range to the rear. Ground floor mullion windows are double chamfered and of 4, 5, 2 (fire window) and 4 lights with continuous ovolo-moulded band above. The chamfered door surround has an inscribed Tudor arched lintel. The upper floor mullioned windows are flush chamfered and are of the same number of lights as the ground floor. The gables are coped and have kneelers. The rear is largely obscured by the garages and parallel range which are either heavily restored or C20 in a C17 style (as in the C20 right hand wing).”

To the east of the site there is a more modern (mid to late C20th) residential development that comprises a crescent of detached and semi-detached properties. To the north of the site along Chadwick Hall Road, the area is also characterised by residential development, comprising a mix of property styles.

PROPOSAL

The application proposes the erection of a detached dwelling on the site. The property would be set into the hillside and constructed against the rear (northern) boundary of the site. The property (including its terraces) would have a maximum width of 25.25m and depth of 16.75m but it would have a terraced layout with the lower levels projecting beyond those above. The depth of the lower ground level would as such reduce to 14.95m and the upper/roof level depth would reduce to 11.4m.

The property would be predominantly set out over two floors that would comprise a basement level and a lower ground floor level. The fenestration to both these levels would be limited to the south (front) elevation where full height glazing would look out/open onto external terraces. The property would be of flat roof construction and the roof level would provide a parking area and additional external amenity space. A further small upper floor development is proposed atop the main roof section and this would be situated to the rear of the property.
and comprise a further flat roof construction of 3.54m depth and 12.95m width. This section of the property would include stairs, a boiler plant/room and a bin store. The maximum height of the property (to the top of the boiler room section) would be approximately 18.8m.

Internally the property would provide four bedrooms one of which would have an en-suite bathroom, a family bathroom, linen store, general store room and a room identified as a gym/pool/hobby room/study etc on the plans to the ground floor. To the lower ground floor there would be a through living area comprising a lounge, dining room and kitchen, a utility room, WC and master bedroom with en-suite bathroom and dressing room.

Externally the property would be externally faced in stone, with vertical timber boarding proposed between some of the window openings. The roof level and lower ground floor levels would have non-reflective glass to external balustrades (height of 1m) and the glazing to the windows is to be non-reflective. An external staircase would be incorporated to the west of the property, providing access from the basement to roof level.

Elsewhere on the site a driveway is to be provided to access the property and this would utilise the existing entrance to Stable Hills and then run around the east of the property and into the site. The driveway would lead to the roof top parking area and this would be enclosed by a timber gate. The remainder of the site is to be landscaped, with the embankment re-profiled using excavated material where possible. The stone walling used to face the property would be extended to the east of the property as part of the landscaping works and to provide a boundary to the driveway and trees and shrub planting is proposed in front of the walls. Additional shrub planting is proposed on the embankment slope.

**RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY**

**National Guidance**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The Department for Communities and Local Government published the revised NPPF on 24 July 2018. The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

**Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy**

C1 Delivering the right amount of housing in the right places
C3 Delivering the right type of housing
C6 Improving health and well being
C7 Delivering education facilities
P1 Improving image
P2 Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage
P3 Improving design of new development
G6 Enhancing green infrastructure
G7 Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity
G9 Reducing the impact of pollution
T2 Improving accessibility
DM1 General development requirements
DM2 Delivering planning contributions and infrastructure

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):
Supplementary Planning Guidance note ‘Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development’.

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

17/00148/FUL – Erection of new detached dwelling including demolition of existing stables – Approved.

16/00767/FUL – Erection of a new detached dwelling including demolition of existing stables – Withdrawn.

09/D51943 – Erection of new detached dwelling including demolition of existing stables – Approved.

08/D51571 – Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of new 2/3 storey dwelling with associated pool house and landscaping – Approved.

08/D51202 – Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of new 2/3 storey dwelling with detached pool house – Refused and Appeal Dismissed.

04/D43824 - Renewal of permission for change of use of premises from stables to residential – Approved.

99/D36964 - Renewal of permission for change of use of premises from stables to residential – Approved.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Conservation and Design – I have considered this revised application for the construction of a detached dwelling on land to the south of Stable Hills, which is adjacent to the Grade II listed Hill House. To the south west of Hill House, located on the steep hillside, is a house named Yasmeen which received planning approval in 1984 (84/D16656) with an extension approved in 1989 (89/D23702). The proposed development site was historically within the curtilage of Hill House but the curtilage changed when the estate was split. A previous planning permission was approved (08/D51571) with a pool house located on the site of the proposed dwelling.
The significance of Hill House lies in its historic interest as a seventeenth century farmhouse. The exterior of the house has been greatly altered over the years, with extensions built, a light coloured render applied to the stonework and the traditional roof slates replaced with clay tiles. These alterations have caused harm to the external character and significance of the building, along with the formation of landscaped formal rear gardens to the south of the property. Despite these alterations, the rural setting of this farmhouse and view across the valley is an important part of its significance. Although the building is now less visible from across the valley because of the planting it is important that any intervention or development within this setting is considered carefully.

The revised heritage statement dated 15 March 2018 states that the earliest available plan of the building from 1851 shows Hill House as an isolated property surrounded by open countryside. This countryside setting has been eroded by residential developments to the north and east, along with the piecemeal development including individual houses such as Yasmeen and late twentieth century alterations to Stable Hills itself. The valley floor is open land with a rural character and was for some time used as filter beds for the waterworks, and the proposed development site shows no evidence of previous development. As the view of the house from the south is still evident I consider it important to retain this rural character as the proposed development site is in a prominent location on a steep hillside to the south east of Hill House. This site appears to have already been cleared by the developer.

The heritage statement explores the impact that the proposed development will have on the listed building and concludes that it will not impact on its immediate curtilage. The drawings submitted show that the proposed dwelling is built into the hillside with no element of it projecting above the ground level at the top of the site. This, along with dense planting along the top boundary of the site, will hide the view of the dwelling from the listed building.

Both the listed building and the development site are visible from the valley floor and the application states that the dwelling will be screened by vegetation on the hillside to shield it from view.

I consider that the proposed development, on a steep hillside below the listed building where both buildings can be viewed together, leads to less than substantial harm to the setting of the listed building. However due to the high level of external alterations carried out to the listed building over the years, the limited views of both properties together, the proposed use of high quality design and materials and the proposed screening, I consider this harm to be minimal.

A second proposed dwelling has been omitted, reducing the impact on the listed building.

The boundary treatments including the extent of screening at the lower level, along with the type of timber for the proposed cladding panels, the type of stone and the driveway surfacing material should be confirmed by condition.
As a low level of less than substantial harm has been identified, the public benefits need to be considered against this harm when assessing the proposal.

**Drainage** - No objections to the application, conditions recommended in respect of foul and surface water drainage.

**Greater Manchester Ecology Unit** - The development would not have any substantive harmful impact on the nearby ‘Meadowcroft Woods’ Site of Biological Importance or on the wildlife corridor function of the Roch Valley.

The retained trees should be protected during the course of any approved development, particularly given the amount of earth movement that may be required to facilitate the development proposed.

GMEU would support proposals for erecting bat and bird boxes on the application site in the interests of biodiversity enhancement and to compensate for any lost roosting/nesting potential that could be lost to tree felling.

**Highways and Engineering** - The additional traffic generated by this proposal will not be substantial and will not compromise local network capacity or add to congestion. Suitable Parking Provision has been made. Access to this site is down a long private driveway. Traffic volumes for this site are expected to be low and I do not expect vehicles to regularly encounter one another moving in opposite directions. In the event vehicles do encounter one another the lane width is however adequate to ensure vehicles can pass without incident. The access road is of a sufficient width to meet the requirements for access for Emergency Vehicles.

Refuse Collection from this location will be a challenge. The distance from the unit to the highway is beyond the distances set out in Manual for Streets. I do however accept that this far from a typical residential development and Manual for Streets is not applicable. Given the length of the private driveway, refuse vehicles would not be expected to collect directly from the properties themselves. Residents would be expected to transport bins to the adopted Highway. I am satisfied bins can be collected from this location without causing an obstruction or inconvenience to other users. The existing highways layout will not change as a result of this development. I do not envisage any road safety issue with this site. Whilst the access is narrow it is within acceptable standards and the character of the area would encourage slow moving vehicles. No public right of way or bridleway will be changed by this proposal.

**Landscaping/Tree Officer** - Initially comments raised various concerns and matters for consideration. Revised comments received following submission of additional information confirm that the landscape scheme is acceptable in principle. It includes a planting schedule of new hedge/shrub/tree planting, though the specific areas/species of planting are not keyed out/shown on the drawing itself. Regarding landscape ecology, there is a lot of information
provided, acceptable species choices and the intent to conserve/enhance existing biodiversity is good. On balance it is acceptable.

Manchester City Council Structural Engineer – The information submitted in relation to land stability is sufficient for the planning stage of the development and should provide comfort to the adjoining neighbour. Building Control Engineers may require more information on slope stability when the retaining wall designs are submitted for approval.

REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been publicised with a site notice, neighbour notification letters and a press notice. Two letters of objection and two neutral representations (including a petition with four signatures) have been received in respect of this application.

Summary of neutral representations;

- Has there been an assessment of ground conditions including ground water and slope instability?
  Officer response – Slope instability and ground conditions are assessed in the officer assessment – section land stability.

- Can the developer demonstrate that there would be no detrimental impact on the structural integrity of surrounding properties?
  Officer response - Slope instability and ground conditions are assessed in the officer assessment – section land stability.

- What are the plans for the disposal of material from the site?
  Officer response – The information submitted with the application advises that some of the excavated material would be used in the re-profiling of the embankment. The disposal of any remaining material would be the responsibility of the applicant as with any other development.

- Questions over the appearance of the upper floor of the development.
  Officer response – The submitted plans show the proposed design of the dwelling. The acceptability of this design is assessed in the officer assessment in the sections – Impact on adjacent listed building and Layout and Design.

- Questions over the proposed materials and lighting for the site.
  Officer assessment – Details of the proposed materials are shown on the submitted plans and they are assessed in the officer assessment sections – Impact on adjacent listed building and Layout and Design. No details of lighting are included with the application but a condition can be included on any approval requiring the full submission of lighting details.

- An assertion that the development will be visible from the public road, public footpath, public space.
Officer assessment – The impact of visual amenity is assessed in the officer assessment sections – Impact on adjacent listed building and Layout and Design

- The existing flagstone wall was removed some years ago – this was a feature of historic importance and should be reinstated.
  
  Officer assessment – The removal of a flagstone wall on the site would not have required Planning Permission. It would not be reasonable of the LPA to require its reinstatement.

- What are gabion walls?
  
  Officer response – A gabion wall is a form of structural support. Slope instability and ground conditions are assessed in the officer assessment – section land stability.

- Has the access on application 08/D51571 been approved?
  
  Officer response – Application 08/D51571 was approved on the 18th February 2009.

Summary of objections;

- Concerns that the development would come at too great a cost to the environment. The site lies in an area of outstanding natural beauty and is frequented by deer.
  
  Officer assessment – the visual and ecological impacts from the application are assessed in full in the officer assessment section – Impact on adjacent listed building and Layout and Design and Ecology and Landscaping.

- The development would alter and spoil the setting of the historic Grade II listed Hill House
  
  Officer assessment – the impact on the setting of Hill House is assessed in full in the officer assessment section – Impact on adjacent listed building

ANALYSIS

Principle of development

The proposed application site is located within a previously undeveloped (or greenfield) area of the Defined Urban Area as designated under the Proposals Map of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). New development, wherever possible and appropriate, should be concentrated within the urban area in order to support urban regeneration and to protect the countryside.

The Council’s Housing Strategy 2017-2022 sets out the following goals for 2022 in respect of new homes that are of relevance to this application:

1. Provide good-quality homes that attract people to live in the Borough
2. Support the housing aspirations of the new and existing residents to ensure there is a wide choice of homes in a range of different tenures
3. Increase the number of high value homes (Council Tax E and above).

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy Policy C1 requires the provision of at least 460 net additional dwellings per year in the period 2012 to 2028 to assist in the creation of successful, inclusive and mixed communities and meet the housing needs. The policy seeks to maximise the use of brownfield sites, however this does not preclude the development of greenfield sites as it states that the development of greenfield sites may be necessary to deliver the target. Policy C3 also establishes that in the north of the borough there will be a focus on providing a range of higher value housing to attract and retain residents.

Whilst the development would make use of greenfield land, it is within the urban area and provides an opportunity to deliver a well-designed higher value home in accordance with policy C3 and the Council's housing strategy.

**Impact on adjacent listed building**

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Policy P2 of the Core Strategy states that the Council will protect the Borough’s heritage by conserving, enhancing and promoting key heritage assets, both statutory and non-statutory, including consideration of their wider settings.

As noted, to the south west of the site stands Hill House, a Grade II listed building. First listed in October 1951, the building is likely to have originally been constructed in the early 17th Century, with a date stone on a door lintel giving the date 1609. The building has a three unit hearth-passage plan and is two storeys. The elevations comprise smooth white render with stone dressings and the roof is tiled. The building has undergone significant alteration/extension with a 20th Century crosswing extension to the right, porch and garage extension, and parallel range to the rear. The listing text reads as follows:

*House. “IH 1609” on door lintel. Dressed with stone with C20 render and roof tiles. 3 unit hearth-passage plan with two storeys throughout, a C20 crosswing to the right, porch and a garage extension, and parallel range to the rear. Ground floor mullion windows are double chamfered and of 4, 5, 2 (fire window) and 4 lights with continuous ovolo-moulded band above. The chamfered door surround has an inscribed Tudor arched lintel. The upper floor mullioned windows are flush chamfered and are of the same number of lights as the ground floor. The gables are coped and have kneelers. The rear is largely obscured by the garages and parallel range which are either heavily restored or C20 in a C17 style (as in the C20 right hand wing).*

Paragraphs 192, 193 and 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework set out that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should
take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets. Paragraph 193 is clear that, when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting.

Paragraph 196 states that, 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.

To assess the impact of the development on the significance of Hill House, a Grade II listed designated heritage asset, consultations have been undertaken with the Council’s Conservation and Design Officer. Through this consultation Conservation and Design (C&D) have advised that the significance of Hill House lies in its importance as a seventeenth century farmhouse. The exterior of the building has been greatly altered over the years, with extensions built, a light coloured render applied to the stonework and the traditional roof slates replaced with clay tiles. C&D have advised that these alterations have caused harm to the external character and significance of the building, along with the formation of landscaped formal rear gardens to the south of the property. Despite these alterations, the rural setting of this farmhouse and view across the valley is an important part of its significance. Furthermore, although the building is now less visible from across the valley because of the planting associated with the garden, it is still important that any intervention or development within this setting is carefully considered.

A heritage statement has been submitted with the application and the revised statement (dated 15th March 2018) states that the earlier available plan of the building from 1851 shows Hill House as an isolated property surrounded by open countryside. This countryside setting has been eroded by residential development to the north and east, along with the piecemeal development including individual houses such as Yasmeen and late twentieth century alterations to Stable Hills. The valley floor is open land with a rural character and it was for some time used as filter beds for the waterworks. The proposed development site shows no evidence of previous development (although it is noted that it has been recently cleared of vegetation). As the view of the house from the south is still evident it is important to retain this rural character as the proposed development site is in a prominent location on a steep hillside to the south east of Hill House.

Further to the above, the heritage statement also explores the impact that the proposed development would have on the listed building and it concludes that it would not impact on its immediate curtilage. In respect of this, the submitted drawings show that the proposed development would be built into the hillside with no element of it projecting above the ground level at the top of the site. This position of the proposed dwelling along with dense planting along the top boundary of the site would hide the view of the dwelling from the listed building.
Whilst the development would be screened from the listed building both the listed building and the development site are visible from the valley floor. It is noted that the application states that the dwelling would be screened by vegetation on the hillside to shield it from views, it is however considered by the LPA that dwelling would be visible from the valley floor despite this vegetation.

In considering the impacts of these views, where both the listed building and the proposed development would be seen together, it is considered that the development would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of the listed building. However, it is considered that due to the high level of external alterations carried out to the listed building over the years, the proposed high quality design, the materials and the proposed screening, this harm would be minimal. Furthermore, the impacts of the development have been reduced from its first submission with the application being amended from two proposed dwellings to one.

Further to the above it is considered that the development would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of the adjacent listed building. This harm attracts considerable importance and weight in the determination of this application. In accordance with paragraph 196 of the NPPF where a development 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.

The submitted Heritage Statement claims that there are significant public benefits associated with this scheme which it is claimed, clearly and demonstrably outweigh any minor level of harm to the setting of Hill House which could be attributed to the scheme. The public benefits outlined in the Heritage Statement are:

- The provision of a dwelling which will help to meet local housing demand in Rochdale.
- The development of land in a sustainable and accessible location which benefits from good access to existing services and infrastructure. The dwelling will help to reduce demand to develop less sustainable sites.
- Economic investment associated with the development. Jobs will be created/sustained including within the supply and manufacture of building materials and the construction of the dwelling itself.
- The proposed dwelling is of a high quality design which will respect the surrounding context and will help to raise the quality of contemporary architecture in the area and Rochdale more widely.

Further public benefits have also been submitted by the applicant that include references to the Council’s Housing Strategy 2017-2022 which sets out the following goals for 2022 in respect of new homes that are relevant to this application:

1. Provide good-quality homes that attract people to live in the Borough
2. Support the housing aspirations of the new and existing residents to ensure there is a wide choice of homes in a range of different tenures
3. Increase the number of high value homes (Council Tax E and above).
Beneath these goals the housing strategy also states “At present we do not have enough high value housing in the borough, with only 7% of homes in Council Tax Bands E and above, compared to the national average of 19%. The provision of high value housing could increase the wealth profile of the Borough by retaining existing, and attracting new, higher income earning households and skilled workers to underpin the local economy.”

The applicant has also submitted two estate agent valuations of the proposed property that indicate that the house would be valued in excess of £1 million and up to £1.2 million. The Council’s Council Tax Department have confirmed that such a valuation would likely put the property in Council Tax Band H, which is the highest band.

Further to the above, policy SO2 of the Core Strategy also requires application to improve design, image and quality of place and states that this will be achieved through focussing (amongst others); raising the design quality and promoting sustainable developments. Similarly policy C3 states that the Council will deliver the right types of homes, well designed, and built to appropriate densities, to meet the overall needs and aspirations of the borough. Amongst its goals, policy C3 includes the following;

- Ensure new development provides housing types that take account of local needs and aspirations;
- Ensure that the supply of larger and high value housing in the borough is improved
- Require a high standard of design and layout that produces attractive places and takes account of energy efficiency and climate change.

Policy C3 also establishes that in the north of the borough there will be a focus on providing a range of higher value housing to attract and retain residents.

Historic England has produced guidance on what can be considered a ‘public benefit’ in respect of the above policy. The guidance states that “Public benefits… will most likely be the fulfilment of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF, provided the benefits will enure for the wider community and not just for private individuals or corporations.”

The Government also provides additional guidance for development affecting heritage assets and the guidance document “Conserving and enhancing the historic environment” (Published April 2014 and last updated February 2018) states;

“Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 7). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits.”
Further to the above it is considered that those ‘public benefits’ outlined in the application, which relate to the benefits associated with providing a property of high quality design and high value, would comply with the published guidance.

The Council’s Housing Strategy has clearly set out a deficit of high quality builds and high value homes (Council Tax E and above) within the borough and establishes the provision of both of these within the five goals for 2022. Particularly in respect of the provision of high value homes, the Housing Strategy sets out how such housing would benefit the wider community through increasing the wealth profile of the borough by retaining and attracting new, higher income earning households and skilled workers, which amount to public benefits that would outweigh the less than substantial harm to the setting of the Grade II listed building, Hill House. The application is therefore in accordance with the NPPF and C3, P1, P2 and P3 of the Core Strategy.

**Layout and Design**

Policies DM1 and P3 of the Council’s adopted Core Strategy requires development proposals to demonstrate high quality design. In addition, paragraphs 124 and 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) state that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that in determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

The proposed dwelling would be a detached house set into the hillside, having a staggered layout set out over three floors (including the roof level). The dwelling is designed in a contemporary style with large elements of glazing interspersed with sections of vertical timber boarding. The design utilises the site levels by cutting into the slope resulting in a scale appropriate for the site. It would be constructed of natural stone walling, including sections of retaining walls also faced in coursed natural stone with sawn stone copings. The choice of materials and the design of the dwelling responds well to its context and would sit comfortably within the landscape.

The impacts on setting of the adjacent listed building are assessed in full above. While the dwelling will clearly be visible from the valley floor (as discussed above) viewed more widely, the use of non-reflective glazing and natural stone and timber, would result in a contemporary design that helps raise the standard of design more generally in the area and fits in with the overall form and layout of the surroundings. The appearance of the dwelling would also be softened by the inclusion of native planting, as shown on the submitted draft landscaping proposal plan and detailed further below. The proposal would result in a high quality design in accordance with policies P1, P3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF.
Trees

Policy G7 of the Core Strategy requires developments to protect existing biodiversity including trees and vegetation. The NPPF also requires the planning system to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.

As stated above, the LPA are aware that much of the site has recently been cleared of vegetation and this was done without the need for planning permission. Trees still however remain along the site access, including two individual Sycamore trees and a group of Sycamores under TPO278. TPO 278 also includes a mature Horse Chestnut just beyond the North West corner of the site (in the garden of Stable Hills). Individual (not protected) trees are also remaining to the south east and south west corners of the site (mature Sycamore and mature Beech). There are also some less mature trees remaining in the site and there are a number of non-protected trees outside of the site.

In assessing the impact on the trees at and around the site, particularly those that are protected under a TPO it is noted that an Arboricultural Assessment has been submitted with the application but that this was not updated following the submission of amended plans. The submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment does however cover the development proposed for two dwellings, the footprint of which extended beyond that which is proposed for the one. It is as such considered that the Arboricultural Impact Assessment is sufficient to allow full assessment into the impact on trees.

To allow for development, the Arboricultural Impact Assessment notes that two tree groups (G21 and G25 – not protected) require removal. These trees comprise of semi to early mature mixed species and through consultation with the Council’s Landscape Design Officer no objections have been raised regarding their removal. Pruning of some of the protected and non-protected trees along the entrance route is also proposed and again no objections are raised by the Council’s Landscape Design Officer in respect of these works.

Through consultation with the Council’s Landscape Design Officer it is noted that some concerns have been raised regarding the amount of cut, fill and regrading works required for the one house as this has not been updated for one house within the Arboricultural Impact Assessment. However, as previously stated, as the footprint of the one house does not extend beyond the previously proposed two, it is considered that the tree works required and ground disturbance will not go beyond those outlined in the submitted report. The submitted plans also clearly demonstrate the regrading works and amount of cut and it is considered that these works could take place without resulting in any undue harm. It is however considered that any approval on the site should include a condition requiring the submission of an Arboricultural Method Statement that would ensure all the retained trees (within and outside of the site) are protected during the development/construction process and should include protective fencing in accordance with British Standard BS5837 (2012).
Such a condition is in line with the recommendations of the submitted Arboricultural Impact Statement.

Further to the above it is considered that the works proposed to trees around the site are acceptable. Those proposed for removal are not mature and the Council could not require their protection. The more mature trees that are remaining on the periphery of the main site and along the site entrance would be retained and the pruning works as proposed are acceptable. The application is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact on trees and in this regard accords with policy G7 and policy in the NPPF.

Ecology and landscaping

As outlined above, Policy G7 of the Core Strategy requires developments to protect existing biodiversity including trees and vegetation. The NPPF also requires the planning system to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.

To assess the impact on ecology consultations have been undertaken with the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU). GMEU have advised that the development would not have any substantive harmful impact on the nearby ‘Meadowcroft Woods’ site of Biological Importance, or on the wildlife corridor function of the Roch Valley. They have however recommended that the retained trees are properly protected during the course of any approved development, particularly considering the amount of earth movement that will be required to facilitate the proposal, this would be in line with the recommendations outlined above and the requirement for the submission of an Arboricultural Method Statement. Furthermore, GMEU have requested that bat and bird boxes are provided on the site in the interests of biodiversity and to compensate for any lost roosting/nesting potential that could be lost to tree felling, this is a matter that can be controlled through condition.

The Council’s Landscape Design Officer has also been consulted on the application and concerns have been raised that the quality of the Roch Valley corridor landscape has been degraded by the removal of the trees/vegetation on site and the recent earth works. As stated above though, the removal of vegetation from the site did not require removal and GMEU have stated that the development would not have any substantive harmful impact on the adjacent sites of ecological importance.

Further to the above it is also noted that photographs in the submitted Heritage Statement indicate the presence of Himalayan Balsam on the site. It is an offence under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act to allow this plant to grow in the wild. As such, with any approval on the site a condition will be necessary, requiring that prior to the commencement of any works on site (including vegetation clearance) a methodology for the control of invasive species be submitted to and agreed by the council. Once agreed the method statement must be implemented in full. With the inclusion of an appropriately worded condition the Himalayan Balsam on site can be appropriately managed.
In addition to the above, in accordance with the NPPF and the requirement under Chapter 15 to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, it is important that any approved development on the site includes a comprehensive landscaping scheme that includes the provision of native species. A proposed landscaping plan has been submitted and this illustrates where existing trees within the main site will be retained and where native tree, bush and wild flower planting is proposed. It is also noted that the development includes some ornamental hedge planting along the patio edge to provide domestic screening.

The native planting indicated on the landscape plan identifies the following species; Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Holly, Hornbeam, Crabapple, Flowering Currant, Wild Cherry, Wild Privet, Rowan, Copper Beach, Honeysuckle and English Oak. Through consultation with the Council’s Landscape Design Officer, the overall layout and proposed species are considered appropriate for the site and a more detailed landscaping scheme can be required, through condition, detailing the exact scheme.

The Council’s Landscape Design Officer has advised that the replacement of trees should be on a 1:1 basis (it is noted that policy G6 would normally require a 2:1 replacement strategy) and shall be medium and large at maturity species. It is also considered that ornamental species, where used should provide wildlife interest, e.g. be sources of nectar, berries and seeds. As detailed above, the draft landscaping scheme is considered acceptable for the site, but it is accepted that more detail is required in respect of the exact species and their location. This can be conditioned on any approval, ensuring that the proposed landscaping of the site contributes to off-setting the loss of the former vegetation on the site and also providing visual enhancement to the development, softening the proposed dwelling. In terms of ecological enhancements, in line with the requests of GMEU it is also considered appropriate to control the provision of bat and bird boxes on the site. Both these ecological enhancements can be reasonably conditioned on any planning approval and would be in accordance with the requirement of chapter 15 of the NPPF.

Residential amenity

Policy DM1 of the Council’s adopted Core Strategy requires development proposals to demonstrate that they will not have a negative impact upon the amenities of future residents and occupiers. The National Planning Policy Framework advises that planning should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

Further to the above are the considerations of the Council’s Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)’Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development’. The SPD establishes that the following minimum space standards will be applied to all new residential developments and development which affect existing residential properties:

- 21m between directly facing principle windows of habitable rooms, at an upper floor level and 10.5m between a principal window at an upper floor level and a directly facing boundary of the curtilage.
- 14m between a principal window and any directly facing two storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room.
- 10m between a principal window and any directly facing single storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room.

As detailed above, the application proposes a dwelling that would be set into the hillside. This would result in minimal above ground development and all windows and amenity space would face south towards the Roch Valley. The nearest properties to the site would be those at Links View to the east and the host property (Stable Hills) to the north. There would however be in excess of 30m separation distance between the side and rear elevations of the proposed dwelling and habitable room windows (principle elevations) of these adjacent properties. These separation distances would be in excess of the minimal distances set out in the SPD and would protect the nearest existing properties from any harmful levels of overlooking/loss of privacy. Further assessing the scale and layout of the development, particularly with the partly subterranean construction, the development would also not result in any overbearing relationship with neighbours or result in any excessive levels of overshadowing.

Further to the above it is considered that the proposed siting, scale and layout of the development would result in no undue harm to residential amenity and the application would accord, in this regard, with policy DM1 of the Core Strategy and policy in the NPPF.

Highway safety

Policy DM1 of the Council’s adopted Core Strategy requires all development proposals, provide satisfactory vehicular access with adequate parking, manoeuvring and servicing arrangements, taking into account the proposed use and location.

Policy T2 of the Core Strategy sets out that development proposals are required to satisfy the Council’s accessibility hierarchy and are required to provide parking in compliance with the Council’s Maximum Car Parking Standards set out in Appendix 5 of the CS.

To assess the application in respect of highway safety and the above policies consultations have been undertaken with the Council’s Highways Service who have confirmed no objections to the application. The addition of one dwelling is unlikely to generate any noticeable amount of traffic on the local highway network and the proposed parking provision, which allows for the off street parking of at least two vehicles on the roof area of the dwelling, is acceptable. When looking at access to the site it is noted that this would be along a narrow driveway, but this would be of sufficient width for two vehicles to pass. It is however noted that given the narrow width of the drive, refuse vehicles will not enter the site and as such refuse must take place from the adjacent Highway, for which there are no highway concerns raised. Alternatively, private refuse collection could be arranged and this would be outside of the Council’s control.
Further to the above it is considered that the development would not result in any undue harm to highway safety. The application therefore accords, in this regard, with policies DM1 and T2 of the Core Strategy and policy in the NPPF.

**Drainage**

Policy G8 requires the Council to manage water resources and flood risk. Saved UDP Policy EM/7 states that development will not be permitted in areas identified as flood plains, or other areas where development could contribute to increased flood risk.

The Council’s Drainage Officer has provided comment on the application and no objections are raised to the development. The drainage officer has noted that the site is only just over 200m from the River Roch but as it is elevated at least 30m above the river fluvial flooding is not of concern.

It is also noted that the application states that surface water will be disposed of by soakaway but no such details have been provided. No details of the foul water drainage have also been provided. The absence of drainage details is common at this stage of planning and any approval will need to be accompanied by condition/s requiring full drainage details and this should include the provision of sustainable drainage in accordance with policy G8 of the Core Strategy.

**Contamination**

A Contaminated Land Phase 1 report has been submitted with the application and assessed by the Council’s Public Protection Officer. The report recommends that the site would be acceptable for residential use but it is also recommended that soil sampling be undertaken.

It is considered that these required reports could be appropriately conditioned and as such, there are no undue contamination risks associated with developing the site. The site also notes that there is a low but credible gas risk in the area and as such gas monitoring should take place.

The Council’s Public Protection Officer has raised no objections to the submitted Phase I report and given its recommendation it is considered that a Phase II report is also required and this can be reasonably conditioned on any approval to accord with the requirements of Core Strategy policy G9 and the NPPF.

**Land Stability**

It is noted that the neighbour objections received have raised concerns regarding the structural stability of such a development and the impact the proposal could have on the structural integrity of the nearby houses. Policy G9 of the Core Strategy requires that any risks associated with land instability are identified prior to any development taking place on that land and that the identified actions are taken.
In respect of land stability the applicants have submitted a slope stability assessment. Borehole investigations as well as local and regional land stability issues have concluded that the risk of slope instability was low. The report also notes that the nearest properties on links view are in excess of 30m from the site so are well out of the way of any potential zone of influence from any excavations from the dwelling. The report states that it is likely that excavations would be undertaken using bored or steel sheet pile retaining walls and this would reduce the lateral extent of the works, further mitigating potential effects on neighbouring properties. Geo-Environmental Specialists and Geologists will also ensure that permanent and temporary works on site will be designed and monitored to verify their efficacy and stability.

In assessing the suitability of the details submitted the application has been discussed with the Council’s Building Control Team who have advised that development of the site would be structurally possible and through their application process they would require that the development was constructed so as to not result in any structural/land stability issues for the site or surrounding land. The Council has also sought independent advice in respect of the applicant’s submission and this has confirmed that the details submitted in respect of structural stability are sufficient for the planning stages of the proposed development. It is recognised that additional structural detail may be required at the building regulations stage of the development, and further details regarding retaining structures can also be requested as part of a landscaping condition. However, the Council satisfied that there are no under planning concerns with respect the structural stability of the site and policy G9 of the Core Strategy.

Conclusion

The proposed development would provide a high quality contemporary dwelling in a sustainable location and on a site where residential development has been previously approved. However, when viewed from the Roch Valley to the south of the site the development would be viewed in the same context as the Grade II listed building, Hill House. The significance of Hill House lies in its status as a seventeenth century farmhouse and this includes the rural setting of the farmhouse and the view across the valley. The proposed development would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of Hill House and this harm attracts considerable importance and weight in determining the application. Paying special regard to the desirability of preserving its setting, it is however considered that this less than substantial harm to the setting would be outweighed by the public benefits associated with the development, namely in the development of a high quality and higher value property that would meet the aspirations of the Council’s Housing Strategy 2017-2022. The application is therefore in accordance with the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Planning and Licensing Committee resolves it is minded to **GRANT planning permission** subject to the following conditions:
1. The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

   Reason: To comply with the requirements of section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. This permission relates to the following plans:-

   - Location Plan
   - Proposed Site Plan – Drawing no. G262-052
   - Proposed Elevations – Drawing no. G262-050
   - Proposed Elevations and Floor Plans – Drawing no. G262-051
   - Draft Landscaping Proposals – Drawing no. G262-060

   and the development shall be carried out in complete accordance with these drawings hereby approved.

   Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with the policies contained within the adopted Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. Notwithstanding any description of materials in the application no above ground construction works shall take place until samples and / or full specification of materials to be used externally on the building(s) and for surfacing purposes have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such details shall include the type, colour and texture of the materials. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

   Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory appearance in the interests of visual amenity having regard to the adjacent listed building in accordance with policies DM1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

4. No development shall take place until a foul and surface water drainage scheme, based on the hierarchy of drainage options in the National Planning Practice Guidance with evidence of an assessment of the site conditions and inclusive of how the scheme shall be managed after completion, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. For the avoidance of doubt, foul and surface waters shall be drained on separate systems and the surface water drainage scheme shall accord with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (March 2015) or any subsequent replacement national standards and unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be completed, maintained and managed in accordance with the approved details.
Reason: To ensure the appropriate disposal of foul and surface waters and to manage the risk of flooding and pollution in accordance with Core Strategy policy G8, saved UDP policies EM7 and EM/8 and the NPPF.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: Drainage is an early activity in the construction process and it is in the interest of all stakeholders to ensure that an acceptable scheme is agreed before development commences on site.

5. No works to trees or shrubs, including site clearance, shall take place between the 1st March and 31st August in any year unless a detailed bird nest survey by a suitably experienced ecologist has been carried out immediately prior to clearance and written confirmation provided to the Local Planning Authority to confirm that no active bird nests are present.

Reason: To ensure the protection of any nesting birds on the site and to accord with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and policy in the National Planning Policy Framework.

6. No above ground works shall take place until a scheme for habitat enhancements for the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented in full accordance with the duly approved details and timetable contained therein and may include: bat bricks and/or tubes, bat boxes and bird boxes.

Reason: In order to achieve appropriate biodiversity enhancements as part of the development in accordance with the requirements of Core Strategy polices G6 and G7 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

7. Notwithstanding the details shown on the approved plans, the development shall not be occupied until full details of soft landscaping works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall planting plans, specifications and schedules (including planting size, species and numbers/densities), existing plants / trees to be retained, a scheme for the timing / phasing of implementation works and elements to compensate for loss of trees, shrubs and bird nesting habitat.

The landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme for timing / phasing of implementation or within the next planting season following final occupation of the development hereby permitted, whichever is the sooner.

Any trees or shrubs planted or retained in accordance with this condition which are removed, uprooted, destroyed, die or become severely damaged or become seriously diseased within 10 years of planting shall be replaced within the next planting season by trees or shrubs of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.
Reason: To ensure that the site is satisfactorily landscaped having regard to its location and the nature of the proposed development and to secure biodiversity mitigation in accordance with Policies P3, G1, G6 and G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

8. Notwithstanding the details shown on the approved plans, the development shall not be occupied until full details of hard landscaping works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include finished ground levels, the formation of any banks, terraces or other earthworks, including any retaining structures for land stability, hard surfaced areas and materials, and a scheme for the timing / phasing of implementation works.

The hard landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme for timing / phasing of implementation.

Reason: To ensure that the site is satisfactorily landscaped having regard to its location and the nature of the proposed development in accordance with Policies P3, G1, G6 and G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

9. No development or works of site preparation shall take place until such time as an Arboricultural Method Statement (substantially in accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Report and Arboricultural Impact Assessment - Ref 13583a/PH), including but not limited to detail on which trees are to be removed, which trees are to be retained, any other tree work to facilitate development including pruning, temporary protective barriers, temporary ground protection, site supervision, location of services and, if required, specialist construction techniques in accordance with BS 5837:2012 (Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No development or works of site preparation shall take place until all trees that are to be retained within or adjacent to the site have been enclosed with temporary protective fencing in accordance with BS:5837:2012 ‘Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Recommendations’. The fencing shall be retained throughout the period of construction and no activity prohibited by BS:5837:2012 shall take place within such protective fencing during the construction period.

Reason: In order to protect the existing trees on the site in the interests of the amenities of the area and in accordance with Policies P3, G6 and G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: Protection measures for retained trees are required to be in place prior to commencement of any works on site to ensure no damage is caused.
10. No development shall take place until a detailed remediation scheme that accords with the Phase I Geo-Environmental Site Assessment, produced by TJ Booth ref: rep-tjba-CG-hallmark-stable hills-phs I env-150817.doc.x has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall include an appraisal of remediation options, identification of the preferred option(s), the proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria, and a description and programme of the works to be undertaken including the verification plan. The remediation scheme shall be sufficiently detailed and thorough to ensure that upon completion the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to its intended use. The approved remediation scheme shall be carried out and upon completion a verification report by a suitably qualified contaminated land practitioner shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before the development is first occupied.

Reason: To ensure any contamination on the site is appropriately managed and to accord with policies G9 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: The investigations may require measures that will require implementation prior to construction of the development approved.

11. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 Schedule 2 Part 1 (or any equivalent Order following the amendment, re-enactment or revocation thereof) the Honresfeld dwellings hereby approved shall: not be altered or extended; no microwave antenna shall be affixed to the dwellings; no installation, replacement or alterations to chimneys, flues or soil and vent pipes shall be carried out; no hard surfaces shall be laid or replaced; and no buildings, structure, gates, fences or walls shall be erected under Schedule 2, Part 1, Classes A, B, C, D, E, F or G or Schedule 2, Part 2, Class A of the above Order except with the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to protect the setting of the adjacent Grade II listed building in accordance with policies P1, P2 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.