

Bredbury Gateway, Stockport Planning Statement

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December 2020

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Appendix 1: Site Location Plan

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners [Lichfields] on behalf of Quorum Estates Limited [Quorum], Edmund Hargreaves Ogden, Joanne Louise Ogden, Carlyne Patricia Ogden and Kristine Michelle Ogden. The purpose of the statement is to assist Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council [the Council] in its consideration of a hybrid planning application for:

Part A:

Outline planning permission with all matters reserved for the creation of a commercial/industrial development providing up to 53,327 sqm of B2/B8 employment floorspace (including ancillary office accommodation) along with the provision of other associated infrastructure (including internal plot access, roads, parking, footpaths, internal landscaping and the provision of a car park to serve Stockport Sports Village).

Part B:

Full planning permission for the creation of two commercial/industrial units comprising 39,857 sqm (including ancillary office accommodation), strategic landscaping, the widening and realignment of Bredbury Park Way and the relocation of its junction with Ashton Road, along with the provision of other associated infrastructure (including access, parking and internal landscaping).

Background

- 1.2 The application site extends to approximately 30.90 hectares [ha] and is located adjacent to Bredbury Park Industrial Estate, approximately 5km north of Stockport Town Centre. The site is currently in agricultural use and is situated predominately within Green Belt excluding a small strip of land on the southern boundary adjoining Bredbury Park Way. For the purposes of this report, the site is referred to as 'Bredbury Gateway' which is the name for the development selected by Quorum.
- 1.3 The site featured as a proposed allocation for employment purposes in the original draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework [GMSF] published in October 2016. At that time, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority [GMCA] expected the plan to be adopted in early 2019. However, this programme was later abandoned. Following the election of Mayor Andy Burnham there was a pledge to rewrite the document to better utilise brownfield land. The revised GMSF was subsequently published for consultation between 14th January and 18th March 2019 and at the time it was envisaged that the plan would be adopted by the end of 2021. However, on the 25th July 2019 it was reported in the media that the GMSF was subject to further delay due to a dispute between the GMCA and the Government over the legislation associated with the plan. A further revised draft was finally published on the 23rd October 2020, the programme having been delayed further as a result of the covid-19 pandemic.
- 1.4 At the meeting of Full Council on the 17th November the consideration of GMSF was deferred by Stockport Council. On the 3rd of December 2020 Stockport Council decided not to endorse the latest draft GMSF document. The basis for this appeared to be a preference for the Council to prepare its own Local Plan (the formal minute of the meeting was not available at the time of preparing this report). However, in the context of the consideration of the current application this means that the publication draft GMSF (published as a background document to the GMCA and Stockport Council Agenda during October to December 2020) carries little if any weight.

- 1.5 A planning application seeking outline planning permission for up to 116,129 sqm of B2/B8 floorspace was originally submitted on behalf of Quorum in August 2019 (ref. DC/074399). In February 2020, the scope of this application was amended in order to seek detailed approval for 39,857 sqm, with outline approval sought for up to a further 76,272 sqm (totalling 116,129 sqm and thus remaining within the scope of the original submission).
- 1.6 The scope of the current application is being further varied in the plans and documents that accompany this revised Planning Statement. This is to reduce the quantum of development and facilitate the creation of a significant landscape buffer between the site and the River Tame. This has reduced the net developed area within the site to 21.46 ha, a circa 15% reduction over the previous submission. This has also resulted in a 20% reduction in the quantum of proposed floorspace, with detailed approval still sought for 39,857 sqm of B2/B8 floorspace and outline approval now sought for up to 53,327 sqm (total 93,184 sqm).
- 1.7 In terms of the GMSF, whilst this is not a significant material consideration it is important to note that the application site was identified as a potential employment allocation (Policy GM Allocation 31: – Bredbury Park Extension). It is important because the Council had endorsed previous iterations of the document, and it had been the subject of consultation. It is also worth noting that the evidence that underpinned the GMSF supported the allocation, as well as the Council's own evidence pertaining to its Local Plan. After years of delay there is now a real prospect that the GMSF may not even proceed, and there is a further risk of delay in the Council preparing its own Local Plan. The fact that the GMSF has not been endorsed by Stockport, reiterates why the suitability of the site is being tested through a planning application.
- 1.8 At the same time, there are significant market demands for industrial/distribution premises in Stockport of the size and scale of the proposed scheme now. Inward investment opportunities have been lost as a result of the delay in the plan making process. Delaying the proposals further poses a significant risk that Stockport will miss out on other opportunities to secure significant economic development with the social and regenerative benefits this would deliver. Furthermore, the need for the development is now more acute than ever. Whilst other forms of development are suffering as a result of the pandemic, the logistics sector is going from strength to strength, with demand greater than ever. Bredbury Gateway will create a golden opportunity in Stockport to facilitate economic growth in the wake of the pandemic, creating secure jobs for residents of both Stockport (and Tameside). There is also robust evidence to demonstrate that the application site represents the only opportunity to deliver such a scheme in Stockport.
- 1.9 The scheme will also deliver a significant range of other benefits including the upgrading of key highways infrastructure within the locality of the site, the improvement pedestrian connections between the site and Brinnington and Houghton Green, significant biodiversity enhancements resulting in a net gain and a highly ambitious approach to carbon reduction through the Planet Mark certification. Full details are set out within this Planning Statement and the other supporting documents.
- 1.10 This statement considers the applications conformity with the Development Plan, relevant national policy, as well as other material considerations; having regard to Section 70[2] of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and Section 38[6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Quorum Estates Limited

- 1.11 Quorum is a north-west based property developer with over 30 years' experience in the commercial property sector. Quorum are recognised as a leading developer and investor in the region and has built a proven track record of delivering high quality development.

- 1.12 Quorum have direct experience of operating in Stockport and working successfully with the Council to bring forward sensitively designed development. Developments have included the new Stockport Homes HQ, which was carefully developed to complement the architecture and heritage of the Stockport Town Hall Conservation Area.

The Planning Application

- 1.13 The drawings listed in table 1.1 and 1.2 are submitted as part of the application. The drawings listed in table 1.1 are those drawings for which approval is sought. The drawings listed in table 1.2 are illustrative and informative:

Table 1.1: Drawings Submitted for Consideration

Reference	Title	Prepared By
B9269-AEW-XX-XX-DR-A-0029 rev P3	Site Location Plan	AEW
B9269-AEW-XX-XX-DR-A-0501 rev P16	Proposed Parameters Plan	AEW
11747-AEW-XX-XX-DR-A-0526 rev P5	Proposed Unit 1 and 2 Site Plan	AEW
B9269-AEW-XX-XX-DR-A-0510 rev P2	Scope of Hybrid Areas Plan	AEW
11747-AEW-01-XX-DR-A-0511 rev P2	Unit 1 Ground Floor Plan	AEW
11747-AEW-01-XX-DR-A-0512 rev P2	Unit 1 First Floor Plan	AEW
11747-AEW-01-XX-DR-A-0513 rev P2	Unit 1 Second Floor Plan	AEW
11747-AEW-01-XX-DR-A-0514 rev P2	Unit 1 Roof Plan	AEW
11747-AEW-01-XX-DR-A-0515 rev P2	Unit 1 Proposed Elevations	AEW
11747-AEW-01-XX-DR-A-0516 rev P2	Unit 1 Proposed GA Sections	AEW
11747-AEW-02-XX-DR-A-0519 rev P1	Unit 2 Ground Floor Plan	AEW
11747-AEW-02-XX-DR-A-0520 rev P1	Unit 2 First Floor Plan	AEW
11747-AEW-02-XX-DR-A-0521 rev P1	Unit 2 Roof Plan	AEW
11747-AEW-02-XX-DR-A-0522 rev P1	Unit 2 Proposed Elevations	AEW
11747-AEW-02-XX-DR-A-0523 rev P1	Unit 2 Proposed GA Elevations	AEW
11747-AEW-03-XX-DR-A-0524 rev P1	Proposed Gatehouse Plan and Sections	AEW
11747-AEW-03-XX-DR-A-0525 rev P1	Proposed Gatehouse Elevations	AEW

Table 1.2: Informative Drawings

Reference	Title	Prepared By
B9269-AEW-XX-XX-DR-A-0505 rev P4	Existing Site Plan	AEW
B9269-AEW-XX-XX-DR-A-0021 rev P7	Constraints Plan	AEW
B9269-AEW-XX-XX-DR-A-0513 rev P5	Illustrative Proposed Masterplan	AEW
B9269-AEW-XX-XX-DR-A-0527 rev P3	PROW Strategy	AEW
8383-L-01 rev E	Landscape Masterplan	FPCR
8383-L-02/03/04/05/06/07/08 rev D	Detailed Planting Plan	FPCR
2556-E101 rev C	Illustrative External Lighting Plan	EDP
SSL:17990B:250:Sheets 1-11	Topographical Survey	Survey Systems

- 1.14 The planning application is accompanied by the following documents:

- Completed Application Forms (prepared by Lichfields);
- Planning Statement (prepared by Lichfields);
- Heads of Terms (prepared by Lichfields);
- Design & Access Statement (prepared by AEW);

- New Development Certification Note (prepared by The Planet Mark);
- Lighting Assessment (prepared by EDP);
- Energy Statement (prepared by EDP);
- Utilities Statement (prepared by EDP);
- Historic Environment & Archaeological Assessment (prepared by CgMS);
- Agricultural Land Classification Report (prepared by Soil Environment Services Ltd);
- Crime Impact Statement (prepared by Paul Martin);
- Minerals Assessment (prepared by Wardell Armstrong); and,
- Statement of Community Involvement (prepared by Lexington Communications).

1.15 The remaining supporting documents relate to topics covered within the chapters of the Environmental Statement [ES] and are contained within the technical appendices as detailed below.

Environmental Statement

1.16 An ES forms part of this planning application and has been prepared under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 [the EIA Regulations].

1.17 A formal scoping exercise has not been undertaken to establish the scope of the ES with the Council. Therefore, the ES has been prepared with a broad scope on a precautionary basis and addresses topics beyond the scope of what may have reasonably been agreed through a formal scoping exercise. The Council since confirmed during the consideration of the original outline planning application that the scope of the ES is acceptable. The ES comprises the following chapters:

Table 1.3: Environmental Statement Chapters

Section	Chapter
A	Introduction and Background
B	Scope and Methodology
C	Site and Scheme Description, including Design Evolution/Reasonable Alternatives
D	Highways
E	Noise and Vibration
F	Air Quality
G	Flood Risk and Drainage
H	Biodiversity
I	Ground Conditions
J	Landscape / Visual Impact
K	Arboriculture
L	Socio-Economic
M	Mitigation and Monitoring

1.18 The detailed assessment of the various environmental issues undertaken within the ES is not repeated within this Planning Statement. This Statement, however, draws upon the conclusions of the ES to assist in the evaluation of the proposals against the context of prevailing town planning policy. Equally, the findings of the other reports submitted with the application are

also incorporated within this statement, to provide a consolidated consideration of the planning merits of the scheme.

Structure of the Report

1.19 The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- Section 2.0 – The Site;
- Section 3.0 – Description of Proposals;
- Section 4.0 – Planning Policy Context;
- Section 5.0 – Overview of Key Planning Issues;
- Section 6.0 – Employment Land & Need;
- Section 7.0 – Green Belt;
- Section 8.0 – Highways & Transport;
- Section 9.0 – Other Material Considerations;
- Section 10.0 – Very Special Circumstances;
- Section 11.0 – Sustainable Development; and,
- Section 12.0 – Planning Balance & Conclusion.

2.0 The Site

Site Location

- 2.1 The site lies approximately 5km to the north-east of Stockport Town Centre within the Borough of the Council but close to its boundary with Tameside. It is located immediately to the north of Bredbury Park Industrial Estate and within the ward of Bredbury and Woodley. It is situated around 1.8km from Junction 25 of the M60 that provides a direct link into the wider strategic highway network, connecting with the M62, M6 and M56 within less than 20 miles. There are also good links with Stockport Town Centre to the south-west from the A560.
- 2.2 The boundary between Stockport and Tameside follows the River Tame that lies to the north and east of the site. The River Tame comprises urban fringe containing a mix of built development, agriculture, informal and formal recreation including sports pitches. Within Tameside is the urban area of Haughton Green and Denton comprising predominantly residential development in closest proximity to the boundary.

Figure 2.1 Site Overview



Source: AEW Architects

- 2.3 The application relates to what is currently an unallocated site comprising predominantly agricultural land located within the Greater Manchester Green Belt. The site is surrounded by a mix of uses including the Bredbury Park Industrial Estate, residential dwellings, Stockport Sports Village, further agricultural land and Ashton Road (A6017), along with the embankment of the River Tame. The site boundary and levels is illustrated on Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.2 Site Location Plan



Source: AEW Architects

- 2.4 The site is located within [distances are calculated from the proposed site entrance and based on the road network]:
- 640m of the Horsefield Arms bus stop on Ashton Road;
 - 1.3km from Junction 25 of the M60 Motorway;
 - 1.6km of Morrisons Supermarket; and,
 - 2.1km of Brinnington Railway Station.
- 2.5 The area surrounding the site is mixed in terms of characteristics and surrounding land uses. In a general sense the River Tame and surrounding open land lies to the north and north east; residential and sport and recreation development lies to the south east; industrial development lies to the west:
- 1 The embankment of the River Tame runs adjacent to the north-eastern boundary of the site. The River Tame runs southwards from the New Years Bridge Reservoir on the Denshaw Moor in Oldham, through the metropolitan boroughs of Oldham, Tameside and Stockport where it meets with the River Goyt to the north of Stockport Town Centre, before joining the River Mersey. The Botany Mill Wood Site of Biological Importance [SBI] is also adjacent to part of the north-eastern boundary of the site, lying between the embankment of the River Tame and the site. The SBI is classified as Grade C and designated for its woodland, grassland and scrub habitats.

- 2 Ashton Road (A6017); a single carriageway road that connects Bredbury to Denton is located to the immediate west. It also links the existing industrial estate through to Junction 25 of the M60. The southern point of the Denton urban area is located approximately 600m north of the site, with Denton town centre located approximately 2.5km to the north. There is a cluster of buildings located on Ashton Road, close to the site boundary which comprises the Castle Croft Kennels, Horse Shoe Farm, the Arden Arms pub and a private dwelling. Castle Croft Kennels are operated out of the former Castle Hill Farm. The Castle Hill Farm House is a Grade II Listed Building [list entry 1242536] which is currently used as a residential dwelling by the owners of the kennels. Two further listed buildings are located to the west of the site, beyond Castle Hill Farm on Far Cromwell Road. These are the Barn Dated 1716 at Arden Garage [list entry 1242524] and Arden Hall [list entry 1259976].
- 3 Agricultural land which does not form part of the application site is located to the north and west. This land is bounded by Arden Road which connects with Ashton Road to the west and Turner Lane to the east. Beyond this lies the embankment of the River Tame. Arden Mill lies between Arden Road and the River Tame although this currently disused.
- 4 Bredbury Park Industrial Estate is located immediately to the south and west of the site. The Industrial Estate forms an employment allocation in the UDP Review [2006] and is Stockport's largest employment destination. The existing Bredbury Park Industrial Estate is defined within the Stockport Employment Land Review 2018 [2018 SELR] as two separate parcels; Bredbury East and Bredbury West. The quality of stock and infrastructure within the Bredbury East parcel is identified as being superior to the west. The industrial estate as a whole accommodates a range of B1, B2 and B8 units although there is a prevalence of B2 and B8 uses. There are over 100 businesses present and notable operations include the Bredbury Park Way Recycling Centre [east], the Viridor Waste Facility [east], the Renold Service Centre [east], the TNT Bredbury Depot [west] and the Allied Bakeries Distribution Centre. The industrial estate is served by Ashton Road, which runs through the centre of the estate, connecting it with Junction 25 of the M60 and Bredbury Park Way which runs through the east of the site connecting with Ashton Road. There is no arterial highway serving the western parcel.
- 5 Turner Lane, an unadopted access road serving a small number of properties, is located to the east of the site and is also used on an informal basis by members of the public. Beyond this to the south-east is the Stockport Sports Village which accommodates a range of facilities including a gym, tennis courts and 3g football pitches. To the immediate east of the sports village, bounded by Lambeth Grove are Wellington Works a locally listed building which is currently occupied by Morrells Woodfinishes and Botany Mill. A further locally listed building; Thorn Works is located to the south-east of Botany Mill. To the south-west of the sports village, a residential home estate (Castle Hill Park) adjoins the site boundary, along with the curtilage of residential properties on Lowick Green directly to the south. The Peak Forest Canal Conservation Area is located approximately 500m east of the site although it is not considered to have any visual or functional relationship with the application site.

Site Description

- 2.6 The site extends to around 30.90 ha in size and is open agricultural land predominantly used as grazing land. The site is designated as Green Belt excluding a small strip of land on the southern boundary adjoining Bredbury Park Way. It is irregular in shape and comprises of fields, the

¹ the Council – Employment Land Review (January 2015)

majority of which are in agricultural use and subdivided by hedgerows and mature trees. There are two existing farms located on the site, both comprising a cluster of buildings. Mill Hill Farm is located at the north of the site, and Finland Park Farm is located to the east. Mill Hill Farm currently accommodates a number of stables and horses graze in the surrounding fields. Hay is also produced on an ad-hoc basis. Finland Park Farm currently accommodates what is marketed as a 'bunny hotel'. In effect it is similar to a cattery or kennel, but cares for a different assortment of animals, but not exclusively rabbits.

- 2.7 At present, there is no formal public access into the site although there are agricultural access points and private access points from Turner Lane at both Finland Park Farm and Mill Hill Farm. The topography of the site is varied with the highest ground found to the east and progressively to the north, where land rises towards the southern Pennines.
- 2.8 The site is not located within a conservation area, nor are there any listed buildings present within its boundary. It is also entirety of the site is located within Flood Zone 1 which is the lowest flood risk category. Sites in Flood Zone 1 have a less than 1 in 1000-year annual probability of flooding from fluvial sources. There is a pond located within the land associated with Finland Park Farm.
- 2.9 No statutory protected sites (e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest) lie within the application site or within 2km of the site although as noted above, the Botany Mill Wood SBI lies immediately adjacent to the site, along the north-eastern boundary.
- 2.10 There are a number of Public Rights of Way (nos. 47BR, 48BR, 49BR and 50BR) that cross the site. A plan showing the full extent of the SBI allocation and alignment of the Public Rights of Way can be seen within the Design & Access Statement. It is understood that no trees on the site are subject of a Tree Preservation Order.

Site History

- 2.11 Historical maps indicate the site has been undeveloped land from the earliest mapping series with several field boundaries crossing the site. Ponds were present throughout the site which have over time been infilled or silted up over the time covered by the historical mapping. The field boundary locations are also shown to have moved over time.
- 2.12 Historical mapping from 1871 indicates that a coal mine (Bredbury Colliery) was located in the south-eastern sector of the site. The coal mine appears to have been an open cast mine with an associated pond. By 1899 the colliery was marked as old colliery and an associated reservoir and shaft were identified. By 1923, an old sand pit is shown adjacent. The coal mine appears to have been infilled by 1980. The former reservoir now forms a pond within the land associated with Finland Park Farm.

Planning History

- 2.13 There is no recent planning history associated with the site. A planning application for a "road system and sewers to service proposed industrial estate" (ref. J/3316) was approved in June 1976. It is understood that this application related to drainage systems that serviced Bredbury Park Industrial Estate. The application boundary encroached into the south-western part of the site. There is also planning history associated with the two existing farms; Mill Hill Farm and Midland Park Farm although none of this is of relevance to this proposal. There is no history of major development proposals relating to the wider site.
- 2.14 In terms of promotion, a consultation on the Vision and Strategic Options for the GMSF, together with a call for sites that might be suitable for housing or employment development took

place between November 2015 and January 2016. The application site was put forward as part of this process by Quorum.

- 2.15 The first draft of the GMSF was consulted on from 31 October 2016 to 16 January 2017. Within this draft, the application site was identified as a strategic allocation (Policy EG2 – Bredbury Park Extension [Stockport]). The site has continued to feature as a draft allocation within the latest two iterations of the GMSF published in January 2019 and October 2020 respectively but the site reference has since been updated to ‘Policy GM Allocation 31’.

3.0 Description of Proposals

Introduction

- 3.1 The applicant proposes an industrial and distribution employment development on the land north of Bredbury Park Industrial Estate, Bredbury, Stockport. This is a hybrid planning application which seeks permission for:

Part A:

Outline planning permission with all matters reserved for the creation of a commercial/industrial development providing up to 53,327 sqm of B2/B8 employment floorspace (including ancillary office accommodation) along with the provision of other associated infrastructure (including internal plot access, roads, parking, footpaths, internal landscaping and the provision of a car park to serve Stockport Sports Village).

Part B:

Full planning permission for the creation of two commercial/industrial unit comprising 39,857 sqm (including ancillary office accommodation), strategic landscaping, the widening and realignment of Bredbury Park Way and the relocation of its junction with Ashton Road, along with the provision of other associated infrastructure (including access, parking and internal landscaping).

- 3.2 This section sets out a detailed description of the proposed development which should be read in association with the accompanying planning application documents.

The Proposal

Detailed Element of the Proposals

- 3.3 The application seeks detailed approval for the widening and realignment of Bredbury Park Way and the relocation of its junction with Ashton Road, the creation of an access into the site from Bredbury Park Way and the erection of two warehousing units (Use Classes B2/B8) which are identified as Units 1 and 2. The detailed element of the proposals also includes the siting of internal estate roads, the delivery of a proposed strategic landscape buffer in the northern part of the site and other infrastructure associated with the Units 1 and 2.
- 3.4 Unit 1 is the largest unit proposed on the site and has a gross external area [GEA] of 27,479 sqm. Unit 2 has a proposed GEA of 12,378 sqm. In total, the detailed element of the proposals seek approval for 39,857 sqm GEA of B2/B8 floorspace.
- 3.5 Unit 1 has a height to ridge of 22.090m, whilst Unit 2 has a height to ridge of 19.162m. Unit 1 is the largest unit proposed within the site in terms of height. The maximum finished floor levels for Unit 1 will not exceed 89.000m Above Ordnance Datum [AOD]. For Unit 2 they will not exceed 90.000m AOD.

Development Parameters for the Outline Element of the Proposals

- 3.6 The outline element of the proposals seek permission in principle for up to 53,327 sqm of B2/B8 floorspace. The submitted Parameters Plan establishes the broad parameters for the elements of the development for which outline approval is sought; and particularly:
- The maximum and minimum building heights;

- The maximum finished floor levels across the zones within the site;
- The extent of the proposed strategic landscape buffer zones; and,
- The location of the dedicated car park to serve Stockport Sports Village.

3.7 This plan, together with the Design & Access Statement, will provide a framework within which any future reserved matters will be considered.

3.8 The development will comprise an industrial and distribution development and the broad parameters of the scheme are:

- The outline element of the application seeks planning permission for up to 53,327 sqm (GEA) of development together with associated works;
- A maximum of up to 40% B2 and between 60-100% B8 floorspace;
- The maximum height to ridge across the outline area will not exceed 19.5m;
- The minimum unit size will be no lower than 4,500 sqm.
- Three development zones are identified on the supporting Parameters Plan where maximum finished floor levels will not exceed 82,000m AOD, 84.500m AOD and 87.500m AOD; and,
- The proposal includes the provision of associated infrastructure including internal estates roads and plot access, service yards, car parks, footpaths, landscaping and drainage systems.

Layout

3.9 It should be noted that Quorum are at advanced stages of discussions with a number of potential occupiers and it is anticipated that agreements will be reached shortly.

3.10 Approval is sought for units 1 and 2, along with the access and internal estate road serving the plots associated with the detailed units. Units 1 and 2 are likely to be the largest units within the site. Certainly, with a height to ridge of 22.090m Unit 1 will be the tallest building. The maximum height to ridge permitted in the outline area will be 19.5m. Unit 1 has been specifically located in the southern-central part of the site adjacent to the existing industrial estate. This is to ensure that the visual impacts of the largest building are reduced by virtue of its location in the least sensitive part of the site, which in turn will minimise harm to the Green Belt.

3.11 The outline elements of the proposals are submitted on a speculative basis and therefore approval for the layout, scale, appearance, landscaping, and access will be sought through subsequent reserved matters applications once the operational requirements of the occupiers has been established.

3.12 In order to demonstrate that the outline element of the development can be delivered within the parameters for which approval is sought, the application is supported by an illustrative masterplan which provides an indicative site layout. Units 1 and 2 for which detailed approval is sought are also shown on this plan.

3.13 Much of the detail associated with site layout will be established through a subsequent reserved matters application, and it is envisaged that the layout for these elements will accord with these principles:

- The parameters plan establishes a strategic landscape buffer zone around the entire site perimeter. Development will be restricted in this zone, with detailed landscape proposals to be submitted and approved at the reserved matters stage. Of particular relevance is the significant strategic landscape buffer zone proposed along the sites northern boundary with

the River Tame. This will ensure that the visual impacts of the scheme on the River Tame and beyond will be minimised.

- The strategic landscape buffer zone will maintain and reinforce the existing trees and vegetation surrounding much of the site which provides natural screening, as well as introducing a significant proportion of new planting to create significantly denser buffer areas. Key areas subject to enhanced screening include the entirety of the sites northern boundary, the south-eastern boundary to assist in reducing visual impact to the Castle Hill Park and the curtilage of residential properties on Lowick Green and the north-western boundary to reduce visual impact on the existing residential properties and businesses located on Ashton Road.
- The buildings will be arranged, to retain the main operational service yards within areas of the development, not directly facing towards the Castle Hill Park and the curtilage of residential properties on Lowick Green, along with the existing residential properties and businesses located on Ashton Road. The use of landscaped buffers will also assist in reducing any noise generation down to acceptable levels.
- Security is an important aspect to any industrial or distribution warehouse operation, so all service yard areas will need to be fully enclosed with fencing, and a gatehouse access point will monitor the arrival and leaving of all vehicles.

Scale & Design

- 3.14 Unit 1 has a ridge height of 22.090m meters, whilst Unit 2 has a ridge height of 19.162 meters. The entire northern half of the site located beyond Units 1 and 2 (on which outline permission is sought) will be subject to a maximum height to ridge of 19.5 meters. This is to ensure that the largest buildings can only be sited in the least sensitive part of the site, adjacent to the existing industrial estate.
- 3.15 The Parameters Plan establishes the maximum height to ridge levels across zones within the site. The south-eastern part of the site adjacent to Castle Hill Park and the curtilage of residential properties on Lowick Green has a proposed maximum height to ridge of 19.5 meters. This has been stepped down from the 22.090m proposed for Unit 1 in order to ensure that the visual impact on the adjacent park homes and other residential properties is minimised. There is a small pocket of land adjacent to Stockport Sports village where the maximum height to ridge will be restricted to a maximum of 16.5m.
- 3.16 The need for maximum height of 19.5m within the majority of the outline area is driven by the need to have a flexible offer that suits a broad range of market requirements. It also relates to the internal functions of industrial / distribution buildings, where automation, racking and internal mezzanines typically require internal clear heights of up to 20m. The use of different cladding material textures and colours between low and high level will assist in reducing the perceived scale of larger buildings.
- 3.17 In response to the proximity of the application site to residential areas and the location of the site in the Green Belt, the applicant recognises the need to deliver a high-quality scheme that will add significant value to the borough. As such, great care has been taken in the siting and design of Units 1 and 2 and this will also be reflected in the design of the rest of the site to ensure the development will make a positive contribution to the surrounding area.
- 3.18 Contrasting elevational treatment of the ancillary office content, feature entrances and corners and a range of colours and profiles of the cladding will all be employed to add visual interest and ensure active frontages to both Ashton Road and the proposed spine road where filtered views are to be provided as part of the landscape proposals.

- 3.19 Units will generally be clad in horizontally and vertically laid trapezoidal profile built up insulated cladding. Horizontally laid composite cladding panels to the corners of buildings and as part of feature panels within the elevations will further break up the scale and massing of the units whilst adding visual interest where appropriate.
- 3.20 The elevational treatment of the ancillary office content would feature horizontally laid composite cladding panels broken by curtain wall glazing and strip ribbon windows, providing an entrance at a human scale and with a degree of shelter to visitors and staff entering the building. To the loading elevations, level access and dock leveller loading doors will be visually contrasting.
- 3.21 Units 1 has a height to underside of haunch of 18m, with a ridge height of 22.090m whilst unit 2 has a height to underside of haunch of 15m. As indicated on the Proposed Parameters Plan, units in the northern half of the site fronting towards the strategic landscape buffer and the River Tame beyond will have a clear internal height (to underside of haunch) of 15m, with a maximum ridge height of 19.5m. Units to the east abutting Stockport Sports Village will have a clear internal height (to underside of haunch) of 12.5m, with a maximum ridge height of 16.5m. These heights reflect the relative sensitivity of the area and meet with institutional standards for industrial and distribution buildings of this quantum of floorspace.
- 3.22 The Proposed Parameters Plan also sets out maximum Finished Floor Levels [FFL] across three zones within the site. The Unit 1 plot will be subject to the maximum FFL of 89.000m AOD, whilst the Unit 2 plot subject to 90.000m AOD. The majority of the northern half of the site will be subject to a maximum FFL of up to 82.000m AOD, with the small plot adjacent to the Sports Village subject to a maximum FFL of 84.500m AOD. The reduced levels in the northern part of the site respond to the sites interface with the Tame Valley. The spatial distribution of the proposed maximum FFL's are identified on the supporting Proposed Parameters Plan. The exact finished floor levels for Units 1 and 2 will be secured by condition.
- 3.23 Further details relating to scale and design are provided in the Design & Access Statement.

Access

- 3.24 The local highway authority has agreed that the site will be accessed from Bredbury Park Way to the south-west of the site. Improvements and widening will be undertaken to ensure that the additional capacity can be suitably accommodated. Details of the proposed access point are shown on the supporting access plan (Ref. VN60707-D108 Rev B). The access point feeds into an internal spine estate road which immediately serves Units 1 and 2 before providing access to the plots in the outline area. Detailed approval is also sought for this. Any additional internal roads within specific plots will be established through subsequent reserved matters applications.
- 3.25 Access for pedestrians and cycles will be via the main vehicular access, or by additional proposed connections from Turner Lane at the eastern edge of the Development Site.
- 3.26 Existing Public Rights of Way [PRoW] across the site will be retained where possible or diverted around the proposed development through landscaped areas to maintain connectivity to the wider network. This includes surface upgrades to improve a bridleway and diverted footpath connecting Ashton Road and Stockport Sports Village, and a new pedestrian footpath linking the existing PRoW to the internal access road.

Landscaping

- 3.27 A landscape masterplan relating to the landscaped areas associated with Plots 1 and 2 has been submitted (ref. 8383-L-01 Rev E). This plan also identifies an illustrative landscaping scheme for the parts of the site where outline approval is sought.

- 3.28 The detailed design for the outline areas and associated management proposals will be advanced in collaboration with the relevant authorities and other technical and environmental professionals in due course (i.e. prior to the submission of any future reserved matters). However, the extent of the strategic landscape buffer around the site is fixed by the parameters plan and thus its extent cannot be altered at the reserved matters stage.
- 3.29 The strategic landscape buffer surrounds the entire site but is most extensive along the sites northern boundary adjacent to the River Tame. The buffer will introduce new woodland comprising predominantly locally typical trees and shrubs species with the aim of promoting local identity and enhancing existing retained woodland/hedgerow habitats. Within the internal areas of the plots new planting will include predominantly native species particularly around the edges and will also include ornamental varieties of plants for visual interest and year-round colour.
- 3.30 The landscape design for the site comprises the retention of field hedges, mature trees and woodland where practical and is supplemented by substantial new areas of planting mainly focused to the edges of the site. This seeks to retain some of the existing landscape character whilst also retaining existing wildlife habitats.

Drainage

- 3.31 The surface water drainage strategy for the site aims to discharge rainwater falling onto the site (and after suitable treatment) into the adjacent River Tame, and where possible utilise the existing public surface water sewer and outfall. This discharge will be strictly controlled and will benefit local conditions by retaining storm water on the site in flood conditions, assisting in reducing flooding downstream.
- 3.32 The development will introduce impermeable drainage areas in the form of buildings and access which will result in an increase in surface water runoff. In order to ensure the increase in surface water runoff will not increase flood risk elsewhere, flow control will be used, and attenuation provided on site to accommodate storm events up to and including the 1 in 100 year plus 40% climate change event.

Construction & Phasing

- 3.33 Construction will start with the creation of the access to the site from Bredbury Park Way, the principal internal estate road and Units 1 and 2. This will then be followed by individual buildings and associated car parks which will be subject to reserved matters approval. The choice of which buildings within the outline area to commence first will be determined by market demand. The development will be delivered over a period of 4-5 years (depending on market conditions).

Planning Obligations – Draft Heads of Terms

- 3.34 Draft Heads of Terms accompany the planning application and set out covenants to be given by the developer in respect of:
- Highways Mitigation;
 - Sustainable Transport Measures;
 - The Creation of Local Jobs;
 - Biodiversity Net Gain; and,
 - Overspill Car Park for Stockport Sports Village.

Community Involvement

- 3.35 Community consultation is an important part of the planning process for new developments in the UK. The Applicant is committed to engaging with and consulting the local community and other relevant stakeholders, wherever possible.
- 3.36 Planning guidance states that pre-application consultations with the local community, the local planning authorities and key stakeholders can bring a number of benefits to the planning application process. Against this background, the Applicant has undertaken a pre-application stakeholder engagement exercise, in order to identify any issues at an early stage and improve the effectiveness of the planning process for all parties.
- 3.37 Lexington Communications [Lexington] undertook the stakeholder engagement exercise on behalf of Quorum at the Stockport Sports Village on 14th June 2018 between 12:00 and 19:30.
- 3.38 Leaflets were distributed to all residential properties that are located adjacent to the site and to the occupiers of the business premises in the industrial estate. Approximately 100 people attended on the day. The exhibition provided information about the site, the planning background and the parameters for the proposed development. Members of the project team were on hand at the event to answer questions and listen to feedback.
- 3.39 Further details on the implementation and outcome of the consultation exercise are provided in the Statement of Community Involvement [SCI], prepared by Lexington and submitted alongside this application.
- 3.40 The design evolution of the scheme has sought to meet the comments and aspirations of the Council and key stakeholders, whilst also taking into account the commercial requirements necessary to secure scheme delivery. Quorum has undertaken an extensive programme of pre-application engagement with both the Local Planning Authority [LPA] and Local Highways Authority [LHA]. Engagement with statutory and local community stakeholders will be on-going throughout the planning application determination period.
- 3.41 The hybrid application is entirely within the parameters of the information that was shared and consulted on throughout the public consultation. The proposals will also be subject to an additional statutory consultation period which will provide a further opportunity for the public to comment.

4.0 **Planning Policy Context**

Introduction

4.1 Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.2 This section provides an overview of relevant National Policy, the statutory development plan for the Borough and other material considerations.

National Planning Policy Framework

4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework [the Framework] sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied by LPA’s. The latest iteration of the Framework was published in February 2019 and is taken into account as a primary material planning consideration in assessing this proposal against national policy.

4.4 Paragraph 7 of the Framework states that “*the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development*”. In the following paragraph, the Framework refers to the three overarching objectives of sustainable development as: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions are defined as:

- a *an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- b *a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and*
- c *an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.*

4.5 Paragraph 11 of the Framework states that “*plans and decisions should apply a “presumption in favour of sustainable development*”. It states goes on to state that development proposals that accord with an up to date plan should be approved without delay, or:

“Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i *The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas of assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
- ii *Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”*

- 4.6 Paragraph 20 states that strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development and make sufficient provision for a range of uses, including employment and other commercial development.
- 4.7 Paragraph 38 requires LPA's to approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 4.8 Section 6 of the Framework regards building a strong, competitive economy and Paragraph 80 requires planning policies and decisions to help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. Paragraph 82 goes on to state that planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors, including making provision for storage and logistics operations at a variety of scales and at suitably accessible locations.
- 4.9 Paragraph 81 requires planning policies to:
- a *set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration;*
 - b *set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period;*
 - c *seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing, or a poor environment; and*
 - d *be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, allow for new and flexible working practices (such as live-work accommodation), and to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.*
- 4.10 Paragraph 82 goes on to state that planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors:
- “This includes making provision for clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries; **and for storage and distribution operations** at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations.”*
- 4.11 Paragraph 92 states that LPAs should ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.
- 4.12 Paragraph 102 of the Framework requires transport issues to be considered from the earliest stages of plan making and development proposals in order to ensure that the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed and that the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account, including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains.
- 4.13 Section 13 of the Framework is dedicated to protecting Green Belt land and Paragraph 134 sets out the five purposes of the Green Belt:
- Green Belt serves five purposes:*
- a *to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
 - b *to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*

- c to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- d to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- e to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

4.14 Paragraphs 143 and 144 regard protecting the Green Belt and state:

“Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.”

Planning Practice Guidance

- 4.15 On 6 March 2014, the Government launched the Planning Practice Guidance [PPG] and cancelled the majority of previous planning practice guidance documents. Following the publication of the revised Framework on 24th July 2018, and the subsequent update published in February 2019, a number of the sections have been amended to reflect the updates. Other sections have been deleted and are intended to be replaced but have at the current time not been published by the Government.
- 4.16 The PPG includes relevant sections on the consideration of planning applications, the use of planning conditions, planning obligations and viability. It also includes advice on specific topic areas including the natural environment, heritage, design, noise, air quality, contamination, and open space, and viability amongst other matters.
- 4.17 Most recently, the Government published a PPG update on Monday 22nd July 2019 in relation to Green Belt. This includes the introduction of a new section setting out matters that need to be taken into account when assessing the impact of development on openness of the Green Belt, along with guidance on ‘compensatory improvements’ as required by the Framework [§138].
- 4.18 The remaining content of the PPG is not repeated here but is referred to below as appropriate in the consideration of the proposed development.

Local Planning Policy

- 4.19 The development plan comprises:
- the Stockport Core Strategy Development Plan Document [SCS] (adopted 2011);
 - the Saved Policies from the Stockport Unitary Development Plan [UDP] Review (adopted 2006);
 - the UDP Proposals Map;
 - the Greater Manchester Waste Plan [GMWP] (adopted 2012); and,
 - the Greater Manchester Minerals Plan [GMMP] (adopted 2011).
- 4.20 A number of the policies within the UDP were replaced by policies within the SCS upon its adoption.

Stockport Core Strategy

- 4.21 The SCS was adopted in March 2011. It sets out the overall spatial strategy for the Borough. It sets down why change is needed; what should be done; and where, when and how it is going to happen, including the provision of supporting infrastructure. The SCS covers the period from its adoption to 2026.
- 4.22 The SCS sets out five objectives which the strategy seeks to achieve. Objective 3 (Economic Development) aims to create:
- “A prosperous and diverse economy with a range of accessible and suitable employment sites to attract inward investment, meet the needs of indigenous businesses and to assist in achieving the sustainable regeneration of the borough and the sub-region.”*
- 4.23 The strategy then sets five criteria which it will follow in order to achieve the objective. Criteria D states:
- “Allocating and protecting appropriate land for industrial and warehousing uses in locations such as Bredbury Industrial Estate and other sites with good transport connections.”*
- 4.24 In order to support the objectives, the SCS provides policies against which development proposals will be considered, along with the Saved Policies from the UDP Review. The most pertinent policies are as follows:
- Policy CS1: Overarching Principles: Sustainable Development - Addressing Inequalities and Climate Change;
 - Policy SD-3: Delivering the Energy Opportunities Plans – New Development;
 - Policy SD-4: District Heating (Network Development Areas);
 - Policy SD-6: Adapting to the Impacts of Climate Change;
 - Policy CS7: Accommodating Economic Development;
 - Policy AED-5: Education, Skills and Training Provision;
 - Policy CS8: Safeguarding and Improving the Environment;
 - Policy SIE-1: Quality Places;
 - Policy SIE-3: Protecting, Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment;
 - Policy T-1: Transport and Developments; and,
 - Policy T-3: Safety and Capacity on the Highway Network.
- 4.25 Policy CS1 sets the overarching principles that the strategy is seeking to achieve. It focuses on addressing social and economic inequalities, protecting the environment, addressing climate change by ensuring the prudent use of natural resources and maintaining high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.
- 4.26 Policy SD-3 sets a minimum and maximum target for reducing CO² emissions in new development based on the costs associated with achieving the reductions, whether a strategic opportunity has been identified to supply the site with low carbon or renewable energy and if there is an existing or proposed district heating network the development could connect to. This will be applied on a case by case basis.
- 4.27 Policy SD-4 sets the Council’s position on creating District Heating Networks.

- 4.28 Policy SD-6 requires development to be designed in such a way as to avoid, mitigate or reduce the impacts of climate change. All development is required to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems [SuDS].
- 4.29 Policy CS7 supports economic development and sets broad locations where B1, B2, B8 and other employment uses will be supported. The Bredbury Industrial Area is identified as a specific location that is considered to be suitable to accommodate B2 and B8 developments.
- 4.30 Policy AED-5 encourages developers of new employment uses to provide funding to provide education and training to help local residents develop the necessary skills to access jobs being created within the borough. When considered appropriate, end users will be required to recruit a certain percentage of the workforce from particular geographical areas.
- 4.31 Policy CS8 sets the high-level strategy for safeguarding and improving the environment across the borough in the context of new development. CS8 is a strategic policy and is followed by more specific environmental policies.
- 4.32 Policy SIE-1 requires development to be designed and landscaped to the highest contemporary standard, paying high regard to the built and natural environment within which it is sited.
- 4.33 Policy SIE-3 sets out the strategy for protecting the natural environment, controlling pollution, managing flood risk and protecting the historic environment.
- 4.34 Policy T-1 concerns transport in the context of development and sets out the strategy for ensuring that developments are sustainable in this regard.
- 4.35 Policy T-3 seeks to ensure that a development will not have an adverse impact on the safety and/or the capacity of the highway network. Mitigation measures must be provided to sufficiently address such issues.

Stockport Unitary Development Plan Review

- 4.36 Many UDP policies were superseded following the adoption of the SCS. However, a number of matters were not addressed by the SCS and extant policies prevail until such a time that the emerging Stockport Local Plan is adopted. Of most significance in the context of this proposal are the policies relating to Green Belt which were not replaced by the SCS. The most pertinent policies are as follows:
- Policy GBA1.1: Extent of Green Belt;
 - Policy GBA1.2: Control of Development in the Green Belt;
 - Policy E1.1: Location of New Industrial Development;
 - Policy TD2.2: Quiet Lanes; and,
 - Policy MW1.5: Control of Waste from Development.
- 4.37 Policy GBA1.1 defines the extent of the Greater Manchester Green Belt within Stockport Borough. Policy GBA 1.2 restricts development in the Green Belt.
- 4.38 Policy E1.1 allocates areas within the borough where new industrial developments will be supported. Proposals for developments outside of these areas may also be permitted if they do not conflict with other policies.
- 4.39 Policy TD2.2 seeks to protect rural roads designated as 'Quiet Lanes'.
- 4.40 Policy MW1.5 requires that adequate provision be made to store, handle and remove waste from a site.

Greater Manchester Minerals Plan

- 4.41 The application site is located within a mineral safeguarding area for shallow coal, brick clay, sand and gravel as defined by the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan (April 2013) [GMJMP]. Policy 8 of the GMJMP requires proposals for non-mineral development within mineral safeguarding areas that do not allow for the prior extraction of minerals to demonstrate why extraction cannot take place in accordance with a number of criterions.

Other Material Considerations

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 4.42 the Council has adopted 11 Supplementary Planning Documents [SPD]. The following three SPD's are particularly relevant to the consideration of the current application pursuant to policies within the current development plan:

- Sustainable Transport SPD (Adopted December 2007),
- Local Employment and Training SPD (Adopted May 2012); and,
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (Adopted April 2012).

Sustainable Transport SPD

- 4.43 The Sustainable Transport SPD aims to assist developers in understanding the full range of possible interventions for the mitigation of effects of additional traffic that can result as a consequence of new development and encourage the use of sustainable transport modes.

Local Employment and Training SPD

- 4.44 The Local Employment and Training SPD aims to support the implementation of Policy AED-5 of the SCS. The document provides guidance and assistance to developers and end users of developments, outlining how the Council will work with and support employers to maximise local employment and skills benefits from new developments.

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD

- 4.45 This SPD sets out the Council's approach regarding design considerations. The document seeks to provide an overview of the design and construction methodologies which the Council consider will ensure that all development in Stockport is as sustainable as it can be.

Stockport Employment Land Review

- 4.46 The Council's employment land evidence base comprises the 2018 Stockport Employment Land Review [2018 SELR], produced on behalf of the Council by CBRE. In addition, various background papers have been produced for Greater Manchester Combined Authority [GMCA] to support the GMSF. This includes the Nicol Economics [Nicol] GMSF Employment Land Needs Paper (February 2020).

Emerging Planning Policy

Greater Manchester Spatial Framework

- 4.47 For six years the ten Greater Manchester Local Authorities had been working together to produce the GMSF, a joint strategic plan to manage the supply of land for jobs and new homes across the Greater Manchester area. The GMSF was intended to set out how Greater

Manchester should develop up to the year 2037 and identify the amount of new development that will come forward across the 10 districts in terms of housing, offices, and industry and warehousing, and the main areas in which this will be focused. It proposed the allocation of strategic sites for employment and housing outside of the urban area.

- 4.48 At the meeting of Full Council on the 17th November the consideration of GMSF was deferred by the Council. On the 3rd of December 2020 the Council decided not to endorse the latest draft GMSF document. The basis for this appeared to be a preference for the Council to prepare its own Local Plan (the formal minute of the meeting was not available at the time of preparing this report). However, in the context of the consideration of the current application this means that the publication draft GMSF (published as a background document to the GMCA and the Council agenda during October to December 2020) carries little if any weight.
- 4.49 The background evidence that has sits behind the GMSF is still to some degree the most relevant and up to date evidence. We therefore refer to that as appropriate in this report.
- 4.50 In terms of the GMSF, whilst this is not a significant material consideration it is important to note that the application site was identified as a potential employment allocation (Policy GM Allocation 31: – Bredbury Park Extension). It is important because the Council had endorsed previous iterations of the document, and it had been the subject of consultation. This was the only GMSF employment allocation in Stockport Borough.
- 4.51 Stockport’s withdrawal from the GMSF process has left the future of the GMSF hanging in the balance. The remaining 9 authorities are now considering whether or not to proceed with a joint development plan without Stockport. Whether or not this will proceed is not yet clear but if it does the document is likely to require a substantial rewrite and the supporting evidence base will need to be refreshed. What is clear is that Stockport will not feature in any future iteration of the document.

Stockport Local Plan

- 4.52 The Stockport Local Plan will replace the SCS and the remaining ‘saved’ policies of the UDP Review.
- 4.53 Progress on the Stockport Local Plan had been largely stalled due to the ongoing GMSF process. However, in light of the Council’s decision not to endorse the GMSF, they now have three years to prepare a new Local Plan. This will become the principal development plan document for the Borough and will provide the overall spatial vision and framework for the future sustainable development. It will address needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure as well as providing a basis for safeguarding the environment. The Stockport Local Plan will set out broad locations and specific allocations of land for different purposes. The period 2020-2037 is considered reasonable being the likely period for a future Local Plan for Stockport.
- 4.54 It is envisaged that further information on Stockport’s intentions and proposed timetable for a new Local Plan will begin to emerge in the first part of 2021.

5.0 Overview of Key Planning Issues

- 5.1 The previous sections have described the nature of the proposals at Bredbury Gateway and outlined the relevant national and development plan policies upon which a decision on the planning application should be made. Section 38(6) of the 2004 Act and Section 70(2) of the 1990 Act require that the applications be determined in accordance with the provisions of the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 In this context, it is important to note that it is the UDP which sets out the relevant policies relating to the Green Belt. The UDP is now substantially out-of-date with the plan period ending in 2011 and the Council superseding important parts of the plan through the adoption of the SCS which acknowledges that there is limited land available for employment development in Stockport.
- 5.3 Policy GBA1.1 of the UDP sets out what development is appropriate in the Green Belt in accordance with the requirements of the then Planning Practice Guidance 2 [PPG2] (Green Belts). This was superseded by the Framework on 27th March 2012. This development proposal does not constitute appropriate development in the Green Belt and therefore under the provisions Policy GBA1.2 of the UDP should be dealt with in accordance with the criteria contained within PPG2 [§3.1-3.3]. Whilst PPG2 has been superseded by the Framework, the guidance on inappropriate development within the Green Belt remains largely unchanged and, in this regard, the UDP is broadly consistent with the Framework [§143-145].
- 5.4 The Framework [§102] also requires consideration to be given to the potential impacts of a development on the transport network at the earliest opportunity to ensure that any such issues can be addressed. The environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure need to be identified, assessed and taken into account when developing proposals, including identifying appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and establishing net environmental gains.
- 5.5 The Framework [§144] sets out that that ‘very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. If such ‘very special circumstances’ exist, the proposal will comply with the Green Belt policies in the development plan. In this regard there is broad conformity between the development plan and the Framework.
- 5.6 Based on this policy analysis there are eight key planning issues raised by the proposed development; namely:
- 1 Is there a need for additional employment development in Stockport and if so, are there any particular requirements associated with that need e.g. a particular demand for larger scale units?
 - 2 Is there land available to meet that need (considering land in the existing urban area, non-Green Belt land)?
 - 3 How does this site compare to other Green Belt sites?
 - 4 What harm to the Green Belt would the proposed development cause and to what extent?
 - 5 Can the impacts of the development on the existing highway network be appropriately mitigated?
 - 6 Does the proposed development comply with the development plan and relevant national planning guidance?

7 Are there very special circumstances, including the need for employment development, that apply in this case?

8 Does the proposed scheme represent sustainable development?

5.7 These eight main issues are considered in the following sections:

- Section 6 – Employment Need & Land (deals with Key Planning Issues 1, 2 & 3);
- Section 7 – Green Belt (deals with Key Planning Issue 4);
- Section 8 – Highways (deals with Key Planning Issue 5);
- Section 9 - Other Material Considerations (deals with Key Planning Issue 6);
- Section 10 – Very Special Circumstance (deals with Key Planning Issue 7); and,
- Section 11 – Sustainable Development (deals with Key Planning Issue 8).

5.8 The overall planning balance and conclusions are set out in Section 12.

6.0 Employment Need & Land

6.1 This section considers key planning issues 1-3 as identified above and seeks to summarise the findings of the evidence-based work undertaken to support this application. The following sections of the report should be read in conjunction with the documents set out below, all of which form technical appendices to Chapter L of the ES:

- 1 Employment Land Needs Assessment [Technical Appendix L1] (prepared by Lichfields);
- 2 Alternative Sites Assessment [Technical Appendix L2] (prepared by Lichfields); and,
- 3 Stockport Industrial Market Analysis Report [Technical Appendix L3] (prepared by JLL).

6.2 Along with the Council and the wider GMCA's own evidence base, these reports collectively form the evidence base which supports the conclusions drawn within this Planning Statement.

Need

Demand & Supply

6.3 The Employment Land Needs Assessment [ELNA] establishes that the requirement for industrial/warehousing land in Stockport Borough over the likely Local Plan period 2020 to 2037 ranges from a low of 43.3 ha based on the Experian projections, to a high of 62.31 ha projecting forward past take up rates during a period of 'strong' economic growth. The average of the 5 scenarios modelled equates to 49 ha, which is very close to the 'overall' past development rate [PDR] take up requirement.

6.4 In terms of how this relates to the supply of industrial land in Stockport Borough, in broad quantitative terms the Council's figures vary. The Council's 2018 SELR reported that 42.3 ha of industrial/warehousing land was available; however, this was based on the 2016/17 AMR, which has now been superseded by the 2017/18 AMR which reports that the supply has fallen sharply, to just 34.08 ha. Table 6.2 of the latest iteration of the GMSF (October 2020) suggested that the existing supply 2020-2037 has fallen still further, to just 58,235 sqm. If a standard plot ratio of 45% is applied as per the 2018 SELR methodology, this suggests that the land supply is perilously low, at just 12.94 ha. At this level it represents only around 5 years based on the current level of industrial land take up (2.65ha per annum). It is important to note that none of this land supply can accommodate the larger units proposed by the current application (as evidenced in the Alternative Sites Assessment that accompanies the application).

6.5 This latter figure would rise to 33.65 ha if the 93,184 sqm Bredbury Industrial Estate extension is included (an additional 20.71 ha applying the standard 45% plot ratio as before). Even if we were to disregard the GMSF evidence base and accept that the Council has a supply of 34.08 ha of industrial land based on its latest AMR, there would be a significant shortfall of between 8 ha and 28 ha under the scenarios modelled.

6.6 Furthermore, this quantitative shortfall does not take into account the very significant qualitative issues highlighted in both the ELNA and the SIMA and accepted in the 2018 SELR.

6.7 In particular, it is apparent that there are no large-scale industrial premises (over 100,000 sq. ft.) either available or coming forward in Stockport Borough to address this latent demand. The SIMA indicates that there is a vacancy rate of just 7.17% across the Borough as a whole, this being weighted towards older premises not suited to current requirements, and is significantly lower in locations such as Bredbury Industrial Estate where premises tend to be newer.

- 6.8 This imbalance in demand vs. supply is particularly acute in the vicinity of Bredbury Industrial Estate. As summarised in the SIMA, Bredbury Industrial Estate remains the principal industrial area of Stockport and is the largest employment area in the Borough.
- 6.9 The Council's own 2018 SELR notes that the Bredbury Industrial Area has the opportunity to provide sites for industrial and warehouse uses, due to the size of the plots, the proximity to the motorway network and the fact that there are few residential properties near to the core of the site [paragraph 4.55]. The qualitative analysis of both Bredbury East and Bredbury West in that document scored the area highly, suggesting that it was "*highly attractive to occupiers and benefitted from an excellent location in close proximity to the M60*" [page 134].
- 6.10 The SIMA supports CBRE's perspective of the site, highlighting the fact that the estate is well laid out with a range of well-specified buildings, excellent accessibility to J25 of the M60 and offering good accessibility to amenities.
- 6.11 JLL has inspected Bredbury Industrial Estate to identify the overall total accommodation, along with vacancy rates. They have reported as of December 2020 an overall vacancy rate of 6.6%. However, there are a number of units under offer within Bredbury Industrial Estate which when complete will reduce this figure.
- 6.12 The expansion of the Bredbury Park Industrial Estate will significantly improve the industrial and warehousing provision of this part of Greater Manchester. This was recognised in the now defunct GMSF which stated:

"The land forms an extension to the existing successful employment area, providing an ideal site for the sort of large scale units which market demand indicates are required in Stockport and which no other sites currently offer. This provides the opportunity to deliver much needed jobs in the locality and to build upon the success of the nearby existing employment area, taking advantage of the benefits of employment conglomeration. The site is closely located to areas of deprivation in Stockport and Tameside and, with the appropriate training and employment opportunities, development will help to deliver jobs that will help to address deprivation issues." [pages 340-341]
- 6.13 The SIMA concluded that there are currently no employment sites in Stockport available capable of accommodating a large- scale distribution unit in excess of 100,000 sq ft. To put this into context JLL confirmed that there are currently live requirements for approximately 4 million sq ft from multiple occupiers seeking space in Greater Manchester who would consider locating in Stockport if a suitable, deliverable site were made available. In addition to the large-scale logistics and distribution market, based on current recorded availability of premises there is currently less than 2 years' supply of industrial premises based on average reported take up for the period 2014 - 2019. Much of the available accommodation is of poor quality in the context of modern occupier needs inevitably leading to many occupiers leaving the Borough to acquire suitable premises. The success of recent industrial schemes such as S Park and Aurora demonstrate the pent- up demand for small to mid-size industrial units within Stockport. As such the Council is in desperate need of employment land to compete with neighbouring boroughs.
- 6.14 In addition to all of the above, none of Stockport's evidence base documents factor in the Stockport Town Centre West proposals being progressed by the Mayoral Development Corporation [MDC]. The MDC is bringing forwards a Strategic Regeneration Framework which covers land to the south and east of Junction 1 of the M60 and west of the A6 incorporating a large swathe of Stockport Town Centre. The proposals include the removal of older industries typically falling within use classes B2/B8 and the redevelopment of the area for a mix of housing and offices. Parts of the area include traditional industries that will be displaced by the

proposals. It is imperative that additional employment land is provided if these important regeneration proposals are to be progressed so as not to force existing business to relocate outside of Stockport.

- 6.15 This includes a small number of larger format uses which the evidence indicates there are no available premises in Stockport. In the absence of available premises there is a significant risk that these businesses will be forced to relocate out of Stockport. The 2018 SELR does not factor in the potential losses of B2/B8 floorspace in this location so it is likely that the overall shortfall of employment land (B2/B8) significantly exceeds the 8 ha and 28 ha range deduced from the current evidence base.
- 6.16 This summary, along with the supporting evidence base (Technical Appendices L1-L3 of the ES) clearly demonstrates that the proposals respond to the requirements of the Framework [§82] in that they make provisions for storage and distribution operations in a suitably accessible location.

Need for Larger Scale Units

- 6.17 The Stockport Industrial Market Analysis [SIMA] contained at Appendix L3 of the ES demonstrates that there is a particularly strong demand for industrial & logistics units in excess of 100,000 sqft (9,290 sqm) in Stockport.
- 6.18 This is further supported by the 2018 SELR which accepts that a significant proportion of the Borough's existing industrial employment stock is made up of dated, poor quality stock located on small sites [§9.57].
- 6.19 However, the SIMA indicates that of all the large-scale industrial premises (over 100,000 sqft) across Greater Manchester either under construction; recently completed or second hand, none are located in Stockport. Furthermore, JLL has calculated that the total availability of vacant industrial premises in Stockport totals just 747,043 sqft (69,403 sqm) across 48 units. Only 2 of these units are over 50,000 sqft in size, as set out within the ELNA. Based on the total volume of industrial/warehouse space that currently exists in Stockport Borough, this produces a vacancy rate of just 7.17%.
- 6.20 The supply imbalance is made more acute by the absence of any available units in excess of 100,000 sqft. This gap in availability means that Stockport is failing to compete with other local authorities for large logistics and manufacturing occupiers with 'footloose' space requirements.
- 6.21 As set out in the ELNA, there is substantial qualitative and quantitative evidence that the industrial market has been suppressed in recent years due to a lack of suitable and viable sites for industrial uses. This would suggest that an accelerated level of growth over and above historic take up rates would be appropriate in order to make some kind of adjustment for latent industrial demand.
- 6.22 In order to ensure that the Bredbury Gateway scheme secures the delivery of larger-scale industrial and logistics units, Quorum are proposing a minimum unit size of 4,500 sqm. This is reflected in the application parameters and can be secured by condition.
- 6.23 It is also worth noting that the shortage of sites suitable to accommodate large scale industrial and warehousing development exists across the whole Greater Manchester sub-region. We understand that Russel Construction have just agreed terms for a 600,000 sqft (with potential for 200K sqft expansion) at South Heywood, Rochdale. This was the last deliverable site in Greater Manchester suitable to accommodate their size requirements. Bredbury Gateway represents a unique opportunity to respond to this shortfall and provide large-scale industrial and warehousing units in Greater Manchester.

Covid-19 Pandemic

- 6.24 We are of the view that the Covid-19 pandemic is a material consideration in respect of the need case for the development. The considerable economic benefits that would be generated by the development are particularly important in light of the significant economic consequences of the pandemic. This is likely to result in further unemployment and commercial / economic pressures across a wider variety of sectors and industries.
- 6.25 The Covid-19 pandemic has had, and will continue to have, significant implications for the development industry as with other sectors of the economy. The first three months of the crisis saw the vast majority of development sites across all sectors closing down sites. This was to follow government guidance and advice and to protect employee and customer welfare. In the latter half of 2020 we have seen sites re-opening but with limitations on capacity to deliver continuing to impact delivery rates.
- 6.26 There is likely to be a significant and ongoing impact upon the economy. According to the Office for National Statistics the UK economy shrank by 20.4% in April, while official jobs data showed the number of workers on UK payrolls fell by more than 600,000 between March and May. The quantity of job losses has been reduced as a result of the Governments Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. This resulted in a significant number of people across a wide range of economic sectors being furloughed. Since March 2020, at least 9.1 million workers have been furloughed by 1.1 million businesses out of around 33 million people in the UK labour force (of which around 28m are employees). This represents around 27% of the working population in the UK and 32.5% of all employees. This level of inactivity is unprecedented and the scale and full impact upon the UK economy has yet to be fully felt.
- 6.27 In light of the unprecedented economic circumstances caused by the pandemic, it is now more important than ever that economic growth is facilitated wherever possible and in sectors of strength that are have not suffered as severely as others e.g. the retail and hospitality sectors. The logistics industry has a unique position in serving a wide range of other sectors, which means that it is considered to be a relatively low-risk industry in terms of responding to economic shocks and is one that offers a level of job security not typically afforded by other industries that may occupy similar types of floorspace. This is further supported by delivery drivers' status as key workers during the Covid-19 pandemic. For this reason, as well as the wide range of skill levels and occupations it supports, the logistics industry is often touted as the primary alternative to lost manufacturing capacity during economic restructuring.
- 6.28 The strength of the logistics sector in spite of the pandemic is reflected by the continuation of high take up rates through its duration to date as reflected in the SIMA. Commercial agents have advised that in the north-west, whilst the initial effects of the pandemic and the resultant lockdown did have a negative effect on enquiries in March and April, this very quickly changed in to May and June and has continued to remain strong throughout the second half of the year. A significant number of short-term lettings were reported in May, along with longer term transactions completing and a significant amount of space going into solicitors hands. Demand continues to be high whilst supply is short in the region.
- 6.29 It is important to note that whilst a majority of residents in Brinnington have traditionally sought jobs in the sales sector, it is highly likely in light of the pandemic and the near 3-month shutdown of non-essential retail that fewer jobs in this sector will exist in the future. This has been exacerbated further but the natural shift from physical shopping to online that was happening even before the lockdown. It is therefore essential that local economies are able to adapt and create jobs in sectors that are likely to not only recover quicker from the pandemic but play an ever-increasing role in economic activity moving forwards.

- 6.30 Whilst other forms of development are suffering as a result of the pandemic, the logistics sector is going from strength to strength, with demand greater than ever. Bredbury Gateway will create a golden opportunity in Stockport to facilitate economic growth in the wake of the pandemic, creating secure jobs for residents of both Stockport and Tameside. Quorum are ready to start on site as soon as planning permission is granted in order to invest in Stockport's future by providing the type of industrial and logistics premises which will attract the sort of occupiers it is currently missing out on due to the chronic shortfall of suitable employment land opportunities.

Conclusions on Need

- 6.31 The Government requires LPAs to create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. In practical terms, the Framework requires them to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account local business needs and wider opportunities for development. Planning policies should be flexible to accommodate needs not anticipated in the Plan; and address the specific requirements of different industrial sectors. As we have demonstrated in the ELNA, this is particularly relevant in the context of Stockport Borough's very substantial unmet industrial needs which risks undermining its future economic growth.
- 6.32 The existing Bredbury Industrial Estate is the Council's premier industrial estate and has a wide range of high-quality occupiers. As such it is nearly at full capacity, with vacancy rates at 3.96% and no plots available within its existing boundaries. The unique potential of the Bredbury Gateway to contribute to strategic employment development in the local economy has been recognised by the Council and GMCA, with the site identified as being a potential allocation for B2 and B8 floorspace where there is potential for long term employment development.
- 6.33 This would go some way towards addressing the very significant quantitative and qualitative shortfall of industrial and warehousing land in this part of South Manchester. Our analysis has suggested that depending upon the scenario modelled, the provision of 93,184 sqm (or 20.71 ha) would make a vital contribution to addressing the 29-49 ha industrial/warehousing floorspace shortfall.
- 6.34 The delivery of Bredbury Gateway offers an opportunity to extend the existing highly successful Industrial Estate to the west and create a critical mass of high value business activity in the southern part of the Borough. It will also provide opportunities for local businesses that are displaced as a result of the Stockport Town Centre West proposals to relocate. It is likely that the consequent step change in the employment offer constitutes the exceptional circumstances that are required to justify the release of the site from the Green Belt in the absence of any reasonable and deliverable alternatives.
- 6.35 The proposed development at Bredbury Gateway will deliver approximately 93,184 sqm of new industrial and warehousing floorspace and would generate a range of direct and indirect economic impacts that would support future growth in Stockport, as well as in the wider sub-regional economy. The quantifiable economic effects of the proposed employment developments at the Bredbury Gateway are set out in Table 6.1 below:

Table 6.1 Economic Impacts of Employment Development at Bredbury Gateway in Stockport Borough

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2
Floorspace (sqm)	37,274 sqm B2 55,910 sqm B8	93,184 sqm B8
Direct Jobs during construction		126 FTEs
Indirect Jobs during construction		189 FTEs
Net Additional Local Jobs during operation	1,518 FTEs	949 FTEs
Direct GVA (£)	£104 million	£43 million
Business Rates (£)	£1.21 million	£1.36 million

Source: Lichfields Analysis

- 6.36 The need case at Bredbury Gateway relates to both the requirement to cater for the demands of the industrial and distribution industries and the overwhelming policy support for the principle of further such developments in Stockport. The need to ensure a robust economic recovery occurs following the Covid-19 pandemic is also a material consideration.
- 6.37 These two key strands of need are clearly related, with the policy makers acknowledging the benefits of pursuing an increase in industrial and warehousing provision in this location and an acceptance that this can only be achieved through the release of land currently designated as Green Belt. Together they combine to present a strong need case for the development and represent a key contributor towards the 'very special circumstances' required to justify development at this Green Belt site.
- 6.38 The ongoing delays in the Local Plan process has meant it is necessary for Quorum to submit this application now, as there is an urgent need to provide the additional employment floorspace required by the market and identified by the Council in its evidence base.
- 6.39 It is our conclusion that the proposed development site represents a key strategic location with excellent opportunities for growth based on the overwhelming potential of the area, that will help to balance the spatial distribution of economic growth in Greater Manchester and North Cheshire and help to meet substantial unmet needs for strategic industrial and warehousing land in Stockport Borough.

Local Employment

- 6.40 Part of the case for very special circumstances [VSC] is centred around the fact that the development would make a significant contribution to addressing the well-established issues with deprivation in the surround local areas, particularly in neighbouring Brinnington. The ELNA highlights that Brinnington falls within the 3% most deprived areas in England. What is clear is that Brinnington and other areas surrounding the site (e.g. Denton) suffer from significantly higher levels of deprivation and unemployment than Stockport and the Region as a whole. Those areas also have significantly lower car ownership than elsewhere in Stockport and the Region. Thus, the close proximity of those areas to the site and their accessibility to the site by walking and cycling means that this development will have a significant impact on the improvement of these metrics and the regeneration aspirations of the Council.
- 6.41 In order to demonstrate that the development would make a significant contribution to addressing these issues we have undertaken an analysis of the demographics in the surrounding areas and how they relate to the job creation opportunities that will arise from the development. The commentary below provides additional information on the types of jobs that will be created and how this will directly benefit residents of Brinnington and other surrounding areas including Denton in Tameside.

Demographics

- 6.42 We have reviewed the data published by Novis on jobseekers allowance by occupation over a five-year period between March 2015 and March 2020. We have then calculated a monthly average by occupation as set out in table 1 below. The percentages are based on the number of people seeking jobs within each sector:

Table 6.2 Job Seekers 5 Year Average by Occupation

Ward Occupation	Bredbury Green & Romiley	Bredbury & Woodley	Brinnington & Central
Sales Occupations	56.5%	53.3%	59.6%
Elementary Trades, Plant and Storage Related Occupations	12.7%	11.1%	14.4%
Elementary Administration and Service Occupations	6.6%	3.3%	6.1%
Administrative Occupations	8.0%	7.8%	5.1%
Transport and Mobile Machine Drivers and Operatives	0.4%	2.2%	2.6%
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	2.3%	0.0%	2.3%

Source: Nomis

- 6.43 During this period, it was clearly the case that the majority of jobseekers within the wards of Brinnington & Central, Bredbury & Woodley and Bredbury Green & Romiley were looking for jobs within sales occupations. However, the second most sought roles were those within the elementary trades, plant and storage related sectors. These are the sort of roles typically generated by B2/B8 uses. In all three wards those seeking roles in these sectors exceed 10% of all jobseekers over the last 5 years (up to March 2020) and this was the second largest jobseekers group.
- 6.44 However, we have also compared the data from the month of March 2020 with the data from October 2020 to assess whether the Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on occupations sought within the three wards. Table 6.3 below combines the number of people seeking jobs across the key sectors included in table 6.2 in March and October 2020:

Table 6.3 Effect of Pandemic on Sought Occupations

Occupation	March 2020	October 2020	Percentage Change
Sales Occupations	140	135	-4%
Elementary Trades, Plant and Storage Related Occupations	25	140	460%

Elementary Administration and Service Occupations	5	5	0%
Administrative Occupations	15	10	-33%
Transport and Mobile Machine Drivers and Operatives	5	5	0%
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	5	5	0%

Source: Novis

- 6.45 The data shows that there has been a dramatic increase of 460% in the number of people seeking jobs in the Elementary Trades, Plant and Storage Related Occupations sector in October when compared to March. There has also been a notable decrease in the number of people seeking jobs in both the sales and administrative occupation sectors. It is starkly apparent that the pandemic has had a significant impact on the types of jobs being sought by local residents in the wards surrounding the application site, with a shift towards the sorts of roles that the Bredbury Gateway proposals will create in significant numbers. Whilst more roles might return to the more traditional occupations post pandemic, the shift towards warehousing and logistics roles is unlikely to recede.
- 6.46 This analysis clearly demonstrates that a significant proportion of the local labour market is seeking roles such as those that would be typically generated by the application proposals.

Job Creation

- 6.47 Whilst it is easy to assume that employment uses such as those that will be generated by the application proposals only create jobs that require significant training such as HGV drivers/machinery operators, this is not in fact the case. In the case of B8 uses particularly, a significant number of typical jobs such as warehousing roles can be undertaken without any particular skills and with limited training requirements. As such, there is no evidence to suggest that those currently seeking jobs within sales-based occupations, could not and would not take a role within a warehousing facility. It is typical that the majority of counter based sales roles also include an element of back office/warehousing requirements and therefore many of the skills held by those seeking roles in sales occupations would be applicable to warehousing roles.
- 6.48 Whilst the end occupiers of the scheme are not yet known, it is reasonable to assume that at least 50% of the development will accommodate B8 uses which are likely to include a proportion of lower skilled jobs. Given that it is envisaged the development will create anything in the region of 949 and 1,518 full time equivalent [FTE] jobs (as evidenced within the ELNA), there will be a significant number of roles applicable to those seeking work within the surrounding wards.
- 6.49 However, it is a misconception that all B8 jobs are warehouse operatives. In reality there are a significant number of semi-skilled, skilled and associated office / sales roles. This is required to support modern systems which B8 uses rely upon, including computer systems and robotics. These are now an intrinsic part of the operations resulting in a wide range of jobs, with opportunities for apprentices and training. The development will also create jobs within the sales/administrative sectors. The proposals include a quantum of ancillary office space that, given the scale of the development will lead to significant job creation in its own right. It is

envisaged that people specifically seeking sales/administrative roles from the surrounding local areas could also be recruited into positions within the development.

Securing Benefits for Local People

- 6.50 Given that creating jobs for local people is an important part of the VSC case, Quorum are committed to ensuring that this comes to fruition. It has therefore been proposed that the provision of an Employment & Skills Scheme focussing on creating jobs for local people. This will be secured by condition and/or a legal agreement which could take the form of the suggested wording below:

“No development, other than demolition and ground works, shall take place until an Employment and Training Statement, detailing how the development will assist and enable local residents to access construction and end-user related employment and training opportunities generated by the development, has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Statement shall be implemented in full.”

- 6.51 The scheme will ensure that future occupiers of the site have to recruit a proportion of staff locally. In reality, the availability of an appropriate workforce in the locality is a key driver for businesses when considering a new location. Potential occupiers will look at the local demographics to identify a good match for the required roles. They already tend to undertake job fairs and other recruitment techniques to ensure that employment opportunities are rooted in the local community. They will also provide apprentice and training opportunities to allow employees to develop into roles. This means that job seekers actively seeking roles in sectors such as sales could receive training to develop their careers and evolve into more skilled roles. This provision will be secured and will be provided. Likewise, during the construction phase, where it is not possible to recruit locally due to skill shortages, training programmes will be funded or directly provided to train local people in the skilled trades required to work in the construction sector. This will likely include working with local colleges to provide apprenticeship schemes.

Alternative Sites

- 6.52 An Alternative Sites Assessment Study [ASAS] accompanies the planning application. It is supported by a by the SIMA which sets out the availability of land in Greater Manchester and the market demand for the type of facilities envisaged at Bredbury Gateway. The SIMA and the ELNA outline that a development of the type and scale proposed at Bredbury Gateway is intended to meet an identified regional need. In particular, the development is intended to meet a specific requirement for large scale strategic industrial/distribution development in the north-east of Stockport. As such, the relevant area of search was established as Stockport Borough and, given its close proximity to the Bredbury Gateway site, Tameside Borough.
- 6.53 The Study seeks to establish whether there are any alternative sites to Bredbury Gateway that could meet the need for large-scale industrial/distribution buildings (in excess of 100,000 sqft) to serve Greater Manchester and particularly Stockport where there is an acute shortage of suitable premises. It provides evidence that no other non-Green Belt site exists that could potentially meet the operational and policy need for such a facility. It also evaluates the availability of other Green Belt sites, to establish whether the locations could accommodate the facility with less of an impact upon the Green Belt and the wider environment.
- 6.54 Notwithstanding the scope of the ASAS, it is acknowledged that the parameters proposed within the application submission seek to fix the minimum unit size (excluding the proposed ancillary retail units) at 4,500 sqm (circa 48,438 sq. ft.). Whilst the proposed development is seeking to meet the significant demand exists for large scale units in excess of 100,000 sqft, this lower

parameter is proposed in order to maintain flexibility and ensure that the development can respond robustly to future market conditions and occupier demand.

- 6.55 It is important to note that there are in fact no modern units currently available in Stockport which exceed 4,000 sqm. As such, even units at the minimum end of the threshold (4,500 sqm) would differentiate the Bredbury Gateway scheme from the rest of the local market as such units do not at present exist.
- 6.56 Notwithstanding the significant qualitative issues identified across the entire portfolio of existing employment stock, we have considered whether or not any smaller units could theoretically be accommodated on smaller, existing sites. Given that we are seeking to secure a minimum parameter of 4,500 sqm, we have considered sites exceeding this size.
- 6.57 Appendix 1 of the SIMA includes an availability schedule for units across the borough of Stockport. The floorspace of each unit is provided. Out of a total of 747,043 sqft of available floorspace, only two units exceed 4,500 sqm which aligns with the minimum size parameter we are seeking to secure.
- 6.58 The first unit is Hilti on the Bredbury Park Industrial Estate and Welkin Mill in Lower Bredbury. However, the Hilti unit has an unusually high office content of 23.5%. This compares to typical office content of 10%. As such, JLL believes that this property will have a very limited occupier demand due to its bespoke nature. The second is Welkin Mill in Bredbury. However, the available units are located in a multi-storey, multi-occupied Mill premises in a number of individual units which does not provide industrial accommodation suitable for modern occupational requirements. As such, neither of these sites are suitable to accommodate even the smallest units proposed at Bredbury Gateway.
- 6.59 As set out above, the ASAS only considered sites capable of accommodating units greater than 100,000 sqft. The full details of the Study are not repeated here, other than to give an account of the findings. It was predominately desk-based but included a visit to each site. In relation to the technical aspects of industrial/distribution developments, nine main areas were considered:
- 1 Size of Site – Minimum of 7.5 ha;
 - 2 Motorway Access – Access to the motorway network within 1.5 kilometres from the site boundary;
 - 3 Strategic Road Network – Access to the strategic road network within 100 metres from the site boundary;
 - 4 Flood Risk – Should be located within Flood Zone 1;
 - 5 Topography – Existing topography varies by 20 metres or less;
 - 6 Local Accessibility – Good access to public transport e.g. within 400m of a bus stop;
 - 7 Proximity to Labour – Well located in terms of existing settlement pattern to ensure future employees can be sourced locally;
 - 8 Relationship to Other Land Uses – Surrounding land uses must be broadly compatible with the proposed development and the impact on sensitive uses minimal; and,
 - 9 Environmental Designations – Preference is to avoid sites which are constrained by environmental designations (e.g. historic environment and nature conservation).
- 6.60 In relation to the impact on Green Belt purposes, each purpose was assessed against consistent criteria.
- 6.61 The Stockport Availability Schedule (SIMA Appendix 1) and the Commercial Enquires Schedule dated 10th December 2020 (Appendix 2 of this Planning Statement) collectively demonstrate

that the scale of the sites required to house all of the enquiries significantly exceed anything that could be accommodated on existing sites smaller than 8 ha in the Borough. As such, this confirms that the minimum site size represents a robust approach.

- 6.62 Following the analysis, the ASAS concludes that there are no non-Green Belt sites that could accommodate the development and only 3 sites within the search area could feasibly accommodate large-scale industrial/distribution buildings to serve Stockport/Tameside and the wider GMCR. These are the Bredbury Gateway Site, Plot 3000 in Ashton Moss which is currently being marketed for employment use and the Littlemoss – Ashton Moss Opportunity Area as put forwards as a draft allocation [Policy GM Allocation 42] in the latest iteration of the GMSF.
- 6.63 However, both Plot 3000 and the Littlemoss – Ashton Moss Opportunity Area were found to be subject to constraints which would require significant time to resolve and could ultimately limit the development potential. Given the constraints involved, both sites failed to comply with the requirements of the ASAS. As a consequence, it is concluded that Bredbury Gateway is the only site capable of delivering the scheme.
- 6.64 The ASAS clearly established that there is no alternative location, either within the existing urban area or an alternative Green Belt site capable of accommodating the proposed Bredbury Gateway development. Indeed, whilst now defunct, the sites long standing inclusion as a draft allocation within various iterations of the GMSF clearly demonstrated that both the Council and the wider GMCA had thoroughly considered the alternative sites case and made the same conclusions as those drawn by this assessment; namely that the proposed Bredbury Park Extension represents the only location capable of delivering an industrial and logistics scheme of the size required to meet the identified significant need.

Alternative Options

- 6.65 A clear need for the proposals has been established and Bredbury Gateway is the only realistic alternative site that can be delivered now.
- 6.66 However, in recognition of the status of the Application Site as Green Belt, there is a need to demonstrate that not only is the Bredbury Gateway site the preferred location for the facilities, but that the form of development proposed also represents the only way in which the need for large-scale industrial/distribution floorspace could be delivered (i.e. that there are no other options). Unit 1 is currently the largest proposed unit with a proposed floorspace of 27,479 sqm (GEA). Whilst details of much of the site layout are reserved, it is possible that other large scale units could be provided in the region of up to 50,000 sqm. There are two parts to the disaggregation assessment, namely:
- 1 Is there a need for a single building of up to 50,000 sqm or could the need be satisfied by a number of smaller developments?
 - 2 Could the buildings be provided on separate sites and still meet the needs of the market?
- 6.67 In this regard, the SIMA includes an assessment for the need of large-scale industrial/distribution buildings.
- 1 There is a market requirement from major users of warehousing for larger facilities with buildings in the order of 50,000 sqm.
 - 2 There are currently no employment sites in Stockport available capable of accommodating a large- scale industrial unit in excess of 10,000 sqm.

- 3 The disaggregation of the floorspace across multiple sites will not meet the needs of the market for a large scale industrial/distribution facility in Stockport that can compete with other North-West locations.

6.68 In relation to the separation of the buildings onto two sites, the ASAS notes that this would be possible and therefore considered that sites of 8 ha or more would potentially be able to accommodate a building of the size and scale required to accommodate some of the development. However:

- 1 There are no sites of this size [8ha] available within the existing urban areas that are suitable for industrial/distribution development. As a consequence, the disaggregation of the development would require the use of two areas of Green Belt land which would have a cumulative impact which is greater than the single release proposed at Bredbury Gateway;
- 2 There are no more suitable sites within the Green Belt that meet the disaggregated parameters for the proposed scale of development; and,
- 3 Policy CS7 of the SCS states that the Council will seek to build upon the benefits that clustering of employment uses can bring which acknowledges that there are positives in avoiding the disaggregation of such developments.

6.69 It is not suggested that only large-scale industrial/distribution developments will meet the needs of Stockport Borough. There are numerous examples of smaller developments/facilities making a valuable contribution to the economy such as the recent schemes in the Stockport at Aurora and S-Park. However, there is a particular need for an industrial/distribution development of the proposed scale which cannot be satisfactorily disaggregated if the efficiency of operations, the attractiveness to the industrial/distribution markets and financial viability are not to be prejudiced. This conclusion reinforces the findings of the review of the policy context, which identifies a clear need for large-scale industrial and distribution buildings, rather than smaller, less efficient alternatives.

6.70 The alternative options case has clearly been considered thoroughly by the Council which has also held the longstanding view that the proposed Bredbury Park Extension is the only option for meeting the identified significant need for large scale industrial and logistics development in Stockport.

Conclusions on Employment Need & Land

6.71 The above analysis has considered the first three key planning issues relevant to the consideration of this application, namely; whether there is a need for additional employment land in Stockport, if there is land available to meet that need, first considering non-Green Belt land and finally how the Application Site compares to other Green Belt sites. In this context, our assessment of these matters has clearly demonstrated the following:

- 1 There is a significant need for additional employment land in Stockport;
- 2 There are no sites located within the urban area which can assist in meeting this need;
- 3 Having considered alternative Green Belt sites, it has been established that Bredbury Gateway is the only site capable of delivering the scheme; and,
- 4 The development will create desperately needed jobs for local residents in Brinnington, Woodley and the wider surrounding area.

7.0 Green Belt

Introduction

7.1 The Application Site's inclusion within the Green Belt has been a key consideration for the Applicant throughout the preparation of the scheme to extend Bredbury Park Industrial Estate. From the initial concept, through to establishing the parameters which are the subject of this application, the need to protect the Green Belt and have regard to its purpose and characteristics has directed project design decisions.

7.2 The Framework [§133] states that there are two essential characteristics of the Green Belt, namely 'permanence' and 'openness'. In addition, the Framework sets out five purposes of including land within the Green Belt; these are to:

- check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and,
- assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

7.3 The Framework [§145] and the UDP [Policy GBA1.2] define those developments and uses that are considered 'appropriate' within the Green Belt. It is recognised that the scale of the works at Bredbury Park Industrial Estate ensure that the proposals can only be considered as 'inappropriate development' within the Green Belt. As a consequence, the Framework [§143] requires 'very special circumstances' to be demonstrated in order to justify development within the Green Belt. In this context, the Framework [§144] states:

"...Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations."

7.4 There is therefore 'definitional' harm caused to the Green Belt by reason of 'inappropriateness' and this must be given substantial weight. However, the Court of Appeal² has found that 'other harm' in this context relates to both the Green Belt and other environmental issues.

7.5 To consider the 'very special circumstances' it is therefore firstly necessary to consider the extent of the harm to the Green Belt that results from the development. As a consequence, an appraisal of the characteristics of the proposed development against the impact on 'permanence', 'openness' and the five Green Belt purposes is set out below. This assessment has regard to two main issues, wider strategic purposes and local more site-specific purposes. The former is as important as the latter as Green Belt is a strategic policy that deals with issues at a high level.

7.6 The 'other harm' to wider environmental matters is considered in relation to the development plan policies in Section 8 (Compliance with Planning Policy).

Harm to Permanence

7.7 In relation to permanence, it makes no sense to ask whether developing a Green Belt site would affect its ability to remain permanently open; it would of course entirely negate that ability. Rather, the issue of 'permanence' is relevant to whether there would be harm to the purposes of

² [2014] Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government, Reigate & Banstead BC and Tandridge DC v. Redhill Aerodrome Ltd [EWCA 1386]

the Green Belt and to whether there might be consequential effects on the remaining Green Belt in the area were the particular parcel in question lost to the Green Belt.

7.8 It is firstly important to consider whether there is any prospect of the Green Belt boundary being amended. In this context there is a real prospect of change, namely:

- 1 The SCS [§3.267] recognises that limited land is available in Stockport for employment development and the strategy relies on new land coming forwards and existing land being redeveloped within the existing employment areas. It is acknowledged that if any existing employment land is lost to other uses then there is a risk of Green Belt land being required to meet the borough's employment needs in the longer term. The SELR was published in January 2015, almost four years on from the adoption of the SCS. The document reports the following [§1.13 & 1.48]:
 - a In recent years, since the adoption of the SCS, losses of employment land within the Borough were larger than completions which resulted in a net loss of employment land;
 - b There is no other land available in the locality, or indeed elsewhere in Stockport or Tameside, that could deliver this development meeting identified needs; and,
 - c There is a significant qualitative deficiency in the supply of employment land, with a lack of suitable provision inhibiting local businesses ability to find suitable accommodation whilst reducing the borough's ability to attract inward investment.
- 2 The above makes it clear that the strategy adopted in the SCS is failing to deliver the levels of B2/B8 development required to meet the needs and demand in Stockport and, as alluded to within the strategy, the need to release Green Belt to meet the boroughs employment needs has clearly arisen due to both quantitative and qualitative constraints associated with the borough's existing supply.
- 3 The SCS [Policy CS7] identifies the Bredbury Industrial Area as having the opportunity to provide sites for industrial and warehouse uses due to the size of plots, the proximity to the motorway network and the fact that the core of the site is isolated from residential properties. However, the Industrial Market Analysis Report³ submitted alongside this application establishes that the Bredbury Park Industrial Estate has a current vacancy rate of 3.96%. This demonstrates that the site is almost operating at capacity with no vacant premises of significance, nor are there any aspirations amongst landowners to deliver a substantial redevelopment within the existing site. As such, there is no realistic prospect of additional industrial and distribution floorspace being delivered within the existing site. However, the expansion of employment uses at the site is promoted within the development plan and in the absence of any obvious development plots within or adjoining the site, the application site represents the only opportunity to deliver the necessary expansion at Bredbury Park Industrial Estate.
- 4 The site formed a draft allocation [Ref. Policy GM Allocation 31] in the now defunct GMSF. Whilst it is now Stockport's intention to prepare a new Local Plan and to not participate any further in the regional strategic planning process, the evidence base remains the same. As such, there is a reasonable prospect that the site will be retained as an allocation within the forthcoming Local Plan. The fact that it is likely that the site will be removed from the Green Belt is, as a matter of law, a material consideration when considering the very special circumstances that exist for releasing the site from the Green Belt⁴. The likelihood of the site's removal from the green belt at a later date should be taken into account when considering the balance of very special circumstances.

³ Bredbury Industrial Estate: Industrial Market Analysis Report – JLL (July 2019)

⁴ *Veolia ES (UK) v. SoSCLG* [2015] EWHC 91 (Admin)

- 7.9 In these circumstances the Council will have to balance the need for employment development against the Green Belt purposes and identify those sites which have least impact for release. However, the delays, and more latterly the failure of the GMSF process has contributed to the necessity for Quorum to submit this application now, as there is an urgent need to provide the additional employment floorspace required by the market and identified by the Council in its evidence base.
- 7.10 Secondly, it is considered application site represents the best site for release from the Green Belt because it is, to a large degree, enclosed by existing development and will have a limited impact on the strategic Green Belt purposes. It is therefore ideally placed to help meet this need without harming 'permanence' because:
- 1 The SCS identifies Bredbury Park Industrial Estate as a 'main focus for economic development' and the encouragement of industrial and distribution development in this location is and will remain a key part of the vision for the borough;
 - 2 The site formed a draft allocation within various iterations of the now defunct GMSF. In light of the overwhelming evidence to support the sites allocation, there is a reasonable prospect that it will also feature in Stockport's forthcoming Local Plan; and,
 - 3 The Application Site will result in a new defensible long-term boundary for the Green Belt and not result in the release of additional land for development.
- 7.11 In these circumstances, the proposals will provide a firm, clear and a defensible long-term Green Belt boundary in this location where such a boundary does not exist at present. It will have a limited impact in relation to 'permanence'.

Harm to Openness

- 7.12 Openness is the absence of development. Clearly the proposals will harm openness but the degree to which this is affected is largely ascertainable by objective means but also necessitates an assessment of more subjective issues such as the visual effect of the proposal. In this context there are two issues to consider, namely: (a) the openness of the wider Green Belt; and, (b) the openness of the site.

Openness of the Wider Green Belt

- 7.13 The Application Site lies between Bredbury Park Industrial Estate and the settlement of Haughton Green in Tameside. The site is contained from to the east by the settlement of Woodley and to the west by the A6017 (Ashton Road), along with small clusters of built development. Views into the site are obscured for much of the sites perimeter and this will be significantly enhanced under the proposals through the delivery of a strategic landscape buffer. In the context of the wider Green Belt, the site is isolated and does not form part of or adjoin a wider land parcel within the Green Belt. As a consequence, the development of the site will not reduce the openness of the wider Green Belt.
- 7.14 In addition, there is an area of local high ground located to the west of the site which further serves to help contain much of the site that adjoins the existing built edge (to the south east and south) and to a degree separate it from the more rural Tame Valley landscape to the north west.

Openness of the Site

- 7.15 It is acknowledged that the development proposals will introduce new buildings on the site and thereby reduce openness. However, the proposed parameters seek to minimise the scale of the development. In particular, height restrictions are proposed across the site to ensure that the visual impact is minimised and to break up the apparent massing of the development. It is

proposed that the outline area will be subject to lower maximum height to ridge levels [16.5m/19.5m]. This is to reduce the visual impact of the development in areas that are recognised to be more sensitive parts of the site. Careful consideration of the site layout, choice of materials and colours, control of light and noise emissions will also limit the impact of the development. It will represent a continuation of the Bredbury Park Industrial Estate and will be reflect the form of development nearby.

7.16 In addition, the design of the proposed planting and ground modelling scheme aims to minimise the visual effects by setting the whole facility within a strong landscape framework appropriate to the location. The landscape proposals are primarily concentrated on the perimeter of the development, namely:

- 1 The provision of a strategic landscape buffer along the sites northern and north-eastern boundary which will protect the setting of the River Tame and conserve views into and from the Tame Valley. The landscape treatments within the buffer will be substantial and robust, providing a soft edge to the interface between the development and the Green Belt. The strategic landscape buffer will create a strong screen, which will improve in stature over the years, immediately screening the car parks and service areas with the buildings largely screened once the planting is established. This will provide a long-term, defensible boundary to the urban area.
- 2 The landscape treatment to the sensitive eastern boundary will be robust and will provide a suitable screen between the residential properties on Lowick Green (and Castle Hill Park) and the development site, which will improve in stature over the years and help mitigate the visual impact of the proposed buildings.

7.17 In each case during the early establishment period, the higher parts of the buildings will be visible against the sky, although this will reduce over time.

7.18 Through the implementation of the ground modelling and planting scheme, the impact upon the openness of the Green Belt will be substantially reduced. By year 15 following the opening of the development, landscaping will be in early maturity and make a significant contribution to the setting and filtering of views towards the proposed buildings. In these circumstances, whilst the proposals will have an impact upon the 'openness' of the Green Belt, this impact will be substantially mitigated and reduce over time.

7.19 On 22nd July 2019, the Government published a PPG update which included advice on what factors can be taken into account when considering the potential impact of development on the openness of the Green Belt [Paragraph: 001/ID: 64-001-20190722]. It is stated that the degree of activity likely to be generated, such as traffic generation should be taken into account when considering the impacts of a proposal on openness. In this instance, the proposals will not generate any activity that will impact on the openness of the Green Belt as the development will only generate traffic on areas locations outwith the Green Belt. This is demonstrated within the supporting Transport Assessment.

Harm to Green Belt Purposes

7.20 The extent to which the Green Belt meets the national policy purposes set out in the Framework [§134] is relevant to the degree of 'harm' to the Green Belt.

Impact on Urban Sprawl

7.21 It is not considered that the proposed extension to Bredbury Park Industrial Estate will contribute to the continued unrestricted sprawl of a large built up area.

7.22 It is accepted that the proposals do, of course, involve development on land beyond the existing urban boundary of Bredbury. However, the application site is largely contained by existing development to the south, east and to a degree the west. Consequently, the development will not result in unrestricted sprawl.

7.23 In addition, this development is not part of a process that is likely to continue following implementation of the application proposals. The existing industrial estate to the south, the A6017 to the west, the residential development and Stockport Sports Village to the east and bank of the River Tame to the north means there are no opportunities for further development in any direction. Further, the substantial and robust landscaping alongside the northern boundary will define the northern extremity of the development and, along with the bank of the River Tame will represent a firm, clear and a defensible long-term Green Belt boundary in this location where such a boundary does not exist at present.

Impact on Merging of Towns

7.24 It is not considered that the proposed extension to Bredbury Park Industrial Estate will have a significant impact on the merging of neighbouring towns.

7.25 As referred to above, the proposed extension to Bredbury Park Industrial Estate is located beyond the settlement boundary of Bredbury but is contained by existing development to the south and east, a main road to the west and the bank of the River Tame to the north. As a consequence, the prospects for any further extension beyond the defined Application Site are limited.

7.26 It is accepted that the gap between Bredbury Park Industrial Estate and the village of Haughton Green will decrease. However, the bank of the River Tame will represent a firm, clear and a defensible long-term Green Belt boundary in this location where such a boundary does not exist at present. Both the southern and northern banks of the river accommodate significant woodland and further fields and woodland beyond the northern bank provide a significant visual screen between the northern boundary of the development and the settlement of Haughton Green, further isolating the proposals and ensuring the built area of Haughton Green retains its existing physical character.

Impact on the Countryside

7.27 The proposals involve development within the countryside. However, as mitigation to this impact, it is noted that:

- 1 The Application Site can be characterised as relatively featureless with fields currently being used for horse grazing, recreational horse riding and on an ad hoc basis for hay production.
- 2 Ecologically, the Application Site only supports fauna or flora of low interest or importance.
- 3 The development of the site will not lead to the loss of high-quality agricultural soils.
- 4 The proposals, whilst involving development in the countryside, will open an area of previously private land to public access, as well as providing ecological enhancement to significantly enhance public enjoyment of the area. As such, the development proposals will have a community benefit.
- 5 Again, the prospect of further development into the adjacent areas of countryside is limited.

Protection of Historic Towns

7.28 The requirement to preserve the historic character of towns is not relevant in this instance.

Impact on Urban Regeneration

- 7.29 It is considered that the extension to Bredbury Park Industrial Estate for an industrial and distribution development will have a positive impact on urban regeneration initiatives.
- 7.30 The Green Belt as an urban regeneration tool is designed to deflect investment towards existing urban areas. In this instance, an Alternative Site Assessment has been undertaken to accompany the planning application. The purpose of this document is to establish whether the development at the application site could be located elsewhere.
- 7.31 The results of the study have demonstrated that there are no alternative non-Green Belt sites within Stockport and the immediate area that could accommodate an industrial and distribution development of this scale. It should also be noted that this is supported by the GMCA's own evidence base which previously proposed to allocate the site within the now defunct GMSF. As such, there is no option but to provide the facility on a Green Belt site. In this instance, the Green Belt, if regarded as sacrosanct, would not act to deflect investment and thereby promote regeneration elsewhere, but, prevent regeneration altogether.
- 7.32 The significant regeneration benefits of the proposals should also be recognised in specific relation to Brinnington, a suburb to the west of the proposed development which is likely to be directly impacted by the operations of Bredbury Gateway due to its close proximity. Brinnington comprises a substantial residential area containing predominantly local authority housing constructed in the 1950s and 1960s.
- 7.33 Brinnington is seen as one of Stockport Council's priority areas for investment and regeneration⁵. Many of the properties in the area belong to Stockport Homes and the 'Three Sisters' (high rise tower blocks) of Brecon, Conway and Ludlow Towers are prominent local landmarks. A precinct outside First House, off Brinnington Road, provides a small shopping area and there are three primary schools (although no secondary school).
- 7.34 Brinnington has benefitted from a number of initiatives in recent years including the replacement Lapwing Sports & Leisure Centre which opened in March 2018 and the Blackberry Vale and Blackberry Point housing schemes that are being delivered by Countryside Properties. There are also a number of social, wellbeing and health initiatives that have been launched to supplement the physical regeneration, largely driven by the Brinnington Big Local group who recently secured funding to expand the local youth centre. The Bredbury Gateway development will deliver high-quality employment opportunities that will further secure the overarching regeneration and renewal of Brinnington.
- 7.35 Bredbury Gateway will significantly enhance the socio-economic conditions of Brinnington which currently displays relatively high levels of disadvantage in the context of employment opportunities by creating a more diverse employment offer that will include highly skilled jobs as the logistics industry continues to expand and diversify. The suburb of Brinnington was originally established to provide homes for the workers of the Bredbury Industrial Estate. The two-pedestrian links enabled workers to commute on foot into work and easily access local employment opportunities. The site is located within a 20-minute walk of Brinnington and as an area with low levels (55%) of car ownership, Bredbury Gateway is a unique opportunity to create new jobs that people of Brinnington can sustainably access.
- 7.36 In addition, the proposals represent a significant investment in the wider local area and will contribute towards existing economic initiatives. The socio-economic chapter of the ES details

⁵ <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/regeneration-and-priority-areas/brinnington-regeneration-plan>

the likely positive impact of the development in this regard and concludes that the proposals will provide:

- 1 Investment of around £77 million over the 5-year construction period.
- 2 The creation of 126 FTE direct construction jobs per annum over the duration of the development phase, plus 189 indirect FTE jobs across the wider economy.
- 3 Provide 1,616 net additional jobs (1,518 FTEs) locally generated by employment uses at the site during operation under Scenario 1; and 1,024 net additional jobs (949 FTEs) under Scenario 2.
- 4 Improvements to the socio-economic outcomes of deprived areas in the impact area by offering convenient new employment opportunities. Notably, the nearby settlement of Brinnington is amongst the 3% most deprived areas within England according to the 2019 IMD. This proposed development will provide Brinnington's residents with employment opportunities making a significant contribution in assisting to alleviate deprivation within the area.
- 5 The creation of new jobs which are likely to suit the local demographic in Brinnington & Tameside and will be accessible to those areas by walking and cycling routes that will be enhanced as part of the development.
- 6 Significant highways improvement works that will mitigate any adverse impacts of the development and upgrade key highways infrastructure in the locality of the site.
- 7 Measures (through local labour planning conditions) to ensure that the employment benefits arising from the scheme benefit local people.

7.37

Wider economic benefits include:

- 1 Enhancing the profile of and the image of Bredbury Park Industrial Estate as a major focus for the industrial and distribution sectors, and send a strong signal of investment confidence in the area;
- 2 It would build on the competitive advantages of the area for the industrial and distribution sectors, including capitalising on the sites strong connectivity with the strategic highway network, contributing towards creating a critical mass of such activities and encouraging further investment so that Stockport remains competitive both within the Greater Manchester City Region [GMCR] and against other areas with similar facilities such as the Liverpool City Region;
- 3 It would help maintain a diversified local economy in an area where mining and manufacturing has declined, and economic growth is a key driver for the area; and,
- 4 It would help maintain an efficient, sustainable industrial and distribution industry in Stockport Borough which builds on the success of recent industrial schemes at S Park and Aurora and is necessary to maintain and support the growth of other sectors such as manufacturing and higher technology activities.
- 5 Support wider regeneration programmes of the Council, including that of the Mayoral Development Corporation at the Town Centre West site.

7.38

Significantly, there is a need for employment development now to stimulate economic activity, there is market demand in Stockport and the Council has identified an urgent need to identify additional land for industrial and distribution development. The location of the development within close proximity to Junction 25 of the M60, will provide a form of development that will provide jobs of an appropriate type to meet the needs of a large number of unemployed people in this part of Stockport. As such, the location of the industrial and distribution development

will assist the strategic objectives of the Council to an extent that other Green Belt alternatives will not. The Council has consistently acknowledged that there are no alternative suitable sites that could accommodate a development of the required scale.

Compensatory Improvements

7.39 The Framework [§138] states that when it is concluded it is necessary to release Green Belt land, ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land should be considered. On 22nd July 2019, the Government published a PPG update which included further advice on this matter [Paragraph: 002/ID: 64-002-20190722]. Specific examples of ‘compensatory improvements’ could comprise are identified as follows:

- The delivery of a strategic landscape buffer with a surface area exceeding 8 ha;
- new or enhanced green infrastructure;
- woodland planting within the strategic landscape buffer;
- landscape and visual enhancements (beyond those needed to mitigate the immediate impacts of the proposal);
- improvements to biodiversity, habitat connectivity and natural capital;
- new or enhanced walking and cycle routes; and,
- improved access to new, enhanced or existing recreational and playing field provision.

7.40 As part of the proposals at Bredbury Gateway, Quorum are providing significant environmental improvements which specifically accord with the examples listed within the PPG. This includes the retention and enhancement of boundary vegetation where possible, the introduction of tree belts, linear woodland and hedgerows and the provision of enhanced walking and cycling routes. Additionally, all of the above will assist in enhancing biodiversity, habitat connectivity and natural capital. As such, the proposals are considered to incorporate compensatory improvements in accordance with the Framework [§138] and the PPG [Paragraph: 002/ID: 64-002-20190722]. Further details of the significant benefits to be provided as part of the development are included in the following sections.

Conclusions

7.41 There is ‘definitional’ harm caused to the Green Belt by reason of ‘inappropriateness’ and this must be given substantial weight. However, the ‘other harm’ to the Green Belt and the environment is limited.

7.42 It is considered that the harm to ‘permanence’ will be limited because of the need to release land for development and proposals will provide a firm, clear and a defensible long-term Green Belt boundary at the A6017 (Ashton Road) and along the bank of the River Tame.

7.43 It is accepted that a development of this scale within the Green Belt will cause harm to ‘openness’ but through mitigation, the harm will not be substantial. Furthermore, the harm to Green Belt purposes will not be substantial because the proposals:

- 1 Will not result in the unrestricted sprawl of a large built up area;
- 2 Will not result in the merging of neighbouring towns;
- 3 Whilst involving development in the countryside, it will not involve development at a site that has any current substantial agricultural, ecological or community value, and will deliver benefits in terms of community access to the countryside;

- 4 Will have no impact in terms of the setting or character of historic towns; and,
- 5 Will assist in urban regeneration, bringing a substantial investment to the local area and delivering much needed local employment opportunities as well as helping achieve strategic objectives of Stockport Borough.

7.44

Overall, when considering key planning issue 4 it is accepted that the proposals will result in a degree of harm to the Green Belt. However, this harm is substantially mitigated as required by the Framework. It is important to note that this is also the position of the Council who has continually supported the sites allocation within the GMSF since the publication of the first draft in 2016. Therefore, the conclusions of the assessment set out within Chapter 7 are supported by the Council's evidence base and decision-making process.

8.0 Highways & Transport

Introduction

- 8.1 The application proposals are supported by the Highways and Transport Chapter of the ES and the accompanying Transport Assessment [TA] and Framework Travel Plan [FTP] which consider the implications and benefits of the proposals on the surrounding highway network. It is acknowledged that the proposed development will have impacts on the network and designing the scheme in a manner that will minimise these impacts has been a key consideration throughout the design process. This section therefore explores key planning issue five:
- Can the impacts of the development on the existing highway network be appropriately mitigated?
- 8.2 The Framework [§102] requires transport issues to be considered from the earliest stages of plan making and development proposals in order to ensure that the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed and that the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account, including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains.
- 8.3 In this regard, the applicant has been engaging with the Local Highway Authority [LHA] and Highways England [HE] and a full scoping exercise has been undertaken prior to the submission of this application in order to agree the most appropriate method for assessing the traffic effects of the proposed development.
- 8.4 The effects of the proposed development on the highways network also need to be considered in the context of the proposed improvement works that have been identified to mitigate the impacts of the development.
- 8.5 The impact of the development on the existing highway network, the significant benefits that will be provided and all other transport and highways matters are considered in the remainder of this section.

Proposed Site Access

Vehicular Access

- 8.6 One vehicular access to the site is proposed and will be achieved via a new priority-controlled access junction from the existing Bredbury Park Way Industrial Estate. The access has been designed to accommodate the movements of a 16.5m articulated vehicle and will provide two lanes upon exit from the site. A pedestrian refuge is also provided across the site access arm of the junction to enable pedestrians to cross safely. The proposed site access arrangement is shown in Vectos drawing ref. VN60707-D108 Rev B which is appended to the accompanying TA. This drawing also shows that the requisite visibility splays can be achieved at the site access.

Pedestrian Access

- 8.7 A pedestrian footway 2m in width will be provided along the southern side of the new access road, providing pedestrian links between the site and the footway on Bredbury Park Way. Along the northern side of the access road, a new 3m wide cycleway / footway will be provided leading into the site from Bredbury Park Way. This will help to encourage trips by cycle. The existing public right of way route through the site will be diverted, with a new, upgraded route provided.

- 8.8 In addition to the above, a new pedestrian and cycle link will also be provided to the east of the site, to link to Stockport Sports Village and the wider Woodley area.

Accessibility Improvements

- 8.9 In addition to these on site measures and design features, a package of improvements are proposed in order to facilitate improved access to and from the site. These improvements include improvements to pedestrian and cycle routes from Brinnington and Houghton Green. The details of the measures are set out in the TA. They have been specifically designed to help capture the economic impact of the development (including new jobs) in the immediate locality of the site where there are low levels of employment and high levels of deprivation. These measures are particularly important due to the lower than average levels of car ownership in these areas, and the desire to promote sustainable modes of transport. This benefits not just the site but also the existing industrial estate.
- 8.10 As part of the proposals, there will be a new car park provided within the site to serve the adjacent Stockport Sports Village. A total of 32 car parking spaces will be provided for the Sports Village within a dedicated car park at the south-eastern edge of the site, close to the Sports Village. The provision of this facility has been proposed following consultation with the Council who have identified a need to relieve parking pressure within the residential streets surrounding the Sports Village in Woodley, which can occur during match times at the Sports Village.
- 8.11 In addition, the scheme will require the re-routeing of some of the PRoW network that passes through the site and these routes will be upgraded as part of this process. A section of Turner lane to the north-east of the site will also require diverting as part of the proposed development scheme. This route is currently not identified as a PRoW or bridleway but is identified as a cycle route and sits within private land. As part of the development, this route will be upgraded to cater for pedestrians, cyclists and horse users. This will protect and maintain this route for future use for the public by providing an improved higher quality connection between Bredbury and Woodley to the south of Tame Valley.
- 8.12 The routes between the proposed site entrance on Bredbury Park Way and both Brinnington and Houghton Green will also be subject to a range of improvement works. This will include enhanced lighting, landscaping works, widening of existing footpaths and the provision of a toucan crossing on the realigned stretch of Ashton Road / Bredbury Park Way.
- 8.13 The links between the Application Site and Woodley are also recognised as an important pedestrian link and improvement works are also proposed here. The proposals include the provision of an improved PRoW connection between the site and Mill Lane, with improved surfacing to facilitate a pedestrian and cycle link. These improvements to the pedestrian and cycle links to Mill Lane from the site will help encourage pedestrian and cycle trips between the site and the Woodley area to be made on foot or by cycle.
- 8.14 The additional improvement works will, provide an improved parking facility at the Stockport Sports Village, increase the accessibility of the Tame Valley to the general public, safeguard the future of the existing PRoW and significantly enhance key pedestrian links between Brinnington and Woodley. These improvements will provide considerable benefits for the general public and should be considered in the overall planning balance.

Assessment of Traffic Impact

- 8.15 It was agreed at the early stages of scoping with the Council and HE that the most appropriate method for assessing the traffic effects of the proposed development would be to develop a VISSIM microsimulation model [VISSIM] of the surrounding highway network including the

M60 junctions 25 and 26. There are a number of benefits associated with VISSIM which allows it to produce more realistic modelling outputs when compared to standalone junction models.

- 8.16 Turning to trip rates, the generation forecasts for the proposed development were derived using a combination of TRICS data and bespoke traffic survey data collected at the existing Bredbury Industrial Estate and were agreed with both the Council and HE prior to the submission of this application.
- 8.17 Full details of the methodology and results of the assessment are included within the supporting Transport Assessment and are not repeated here. However the assessment demonstrated the development would have significant implications on the performance of the existing network in the absence of mitigation. The VISSIM model was able to identify the most significant constraints on the network that contribute to the reduction in network performance under the scenario with development traffic and has identified intervention at the following four locations as delivering the most effective mitigation:
- 1 Ashton Road / Bredbury Park Way (northern junction);
 - 2 Ashton Road / Bredbury Park Way (southern junction);
 - 3 M60 Junction 25 northern dumb bell roundabout; and,
 - 4 M60 Junction 25 Southern Dumbbell roundabout.
- 8.18 Full details of the proposed mitigation package including detailed design is included within the TA.
- 8.19 Overall, the VISSIM model results suggest that the proposed highway works are sufficient to mitigate the effects of the proposed development traffic in the both the morning and evening peak periods, and with notable improvements in network performance, particularly in the evening peak when compared to the situation without development.
- 8.20 As part of the TA, the performance of eight off-site highway junctions was also assessed in more detail via reference to maximum queue length data outputs provided by the VISSIM model. The results of this broadly show improvements in terms of reductions in queue lengths, particularly during the evening peak period. The proposed highway works to be delivered as part of the proposed development are therefore considered to provide appropriate mitigation of the effects of the proposed development traffic,
- 8.21 The TA provides a comprehensive analysis of the transportation effects of the proposed development and clearly demonstrates that the proposed development accords with highway access design recommendations and sustainable principles and would not result in an unacceptable impact upon highway safety. By providing appropriate mitigation measures, the impacts of the proposed development upon highway capacity are not severe and therefore the presumption in favour of the development contained in the Framework is not outweighed by any highways or traffic issues.

Conclusions

- 8.22 The Highways and Transport ES Chapter and associated Transport Assessment clearly identify and discuss the likely levels of traffic that will be generated by the proposed development during both the construction and operational phases of the development.
- 8.23 The potential impacts relating to severance, pedestrian amenity, highway safety and driver delay, and pedestrian amenity have been assessed and where the impact has been identified as moderate or greater, mitigation measures have been considered and identified.

- 8.24 When considered in the context of the proposed mitigation measures, the residual impacts relating to the construction and proposed development generated traffic have been found to be mostly negligible and it is therefore concluded that the impacts resulting from the traffic and transport elements of the construction and operation phases are not considered to result in a significant impact on the environment.
- 8.25 It is also concluded that the proposed development accords with highway access design recommendations and sustainable principles and would not result in an unacceptable impact upon highway safety. It is therefore concluded that the proposals accord with the development Plan [SCS Policies CS10, T-1 and T-3] and the Framework [§102].
- 8.26 On the basis of the above, it is clear that the impacts of the development on the existing highway network can be appropriately mitigated (key planning issue 5).

9.0 Other Material Considerations

Introduction

- 9.1 This section of the report considers the compliance of the proposals with other relevant policies of the statutory development plan together with the relevant supplementary planning guidance (key planning issue 6). It demonstrates that the proposals broadly accord with the relevant policies and, in accordance with s38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act [2004], should be granted planning permission.

Principle of Development

Green Belt

- 9.2 The application site is located beyond the existing urban areas of Bredbury and Woodley, within the designated Green Belt as defined by Policy GBA1.1 of the UDP. It is recognised that the scale of works at Bredbury Gateway and the nature of the proposed use mean that the proposals can only be considered as ‘inappropriate development’ within the Green Belt.
- 9.3 The Framework and UDP [Policy GBA1.2] require ‘very special circumstances’ to be demonstrated in order to justify development within the Green Belt. If an applicant can show ‘very special circumstances’ the proposal will comply with the development plan, but the reverse is also true. The ‘very special circumstances’ will need to clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt by virtue of ‘inappropriateness’ and ‘any other harm’ to the Green Belt or other matters for the application proposals to be positively considered.
- 9.4 In this context, it is accepted that there is ‘definitional’ harm caused to the Green Belt by reason of ‘inappropriateness’ and this must be given substantial weight. However, Section 6 demonstrates that the proposed development will cause limited harm to ‘permanence’ and the harm to ‘openness’ will be substantially mitigated and reduced over time. Furthermore, the harm to Green Belt purposes will not be substantial because the proposals:
- 1 Will not result in the unrestricted sprawl of a large built up area;
 - 2 Will not result in the merging of neighbouring towns;
 - 3 Whilst involving development in the countryside, it will not involve development at a site that has any current substantial agricultural, ecological or community value, and will deliver benefits in terms of community access to the countryside;
 - 4 Will have no impact in terms of the setting or character of historic towns; and,
 - 5 Will assist in urban regeneration, bringing a substantial investment to the local area and delivering much needed local employment opportunities as well as helping achieve strategic objectives of Stockport Borough.
- 9.5 Overall, therefore, the proposals will result in harm by reason of ‘inappropriateness’ and the ‘other harm’ to the Green Belt will be substantially mitigated.
- 9.6 The appraisal in Section 6 also presents the ‘very special circumstances’ that exist at Bredbury Gateway, to justify the development proposals. These are:
- 1 An overriding need for the provision of large-scale industrial/distribution buildings in Stockport, to meet the needs of Stockport Borough, the wider GMCR, the Northern Powerhouse and the objectives of the Local Enterprise Partnership [LEP] and local authorities;

- 2 A lack of alternative sites that could accommodate large-scale industrial/distribution buildings within the established area of search in which the need to provide such a development exists;
- 3 A lack of alternative options, other than the provision of large-scale industrial/distribution buildings, to meet the identified need; and,
- 4 The economic, social and environmental benefits associated with the scheme.

9.7 It is therefore considered that ‘very special circumstances’ do exist to justify the scheme, and that these circumstances are sufficient to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt associated with the proposals (i.e. in relation to both ‘inappropriateness’ and ‘other harm’).

Economic Development

9.8 The need for the proposed development and the role it will play in supporting Stockport’s local economy in fulfilling its economic role within the wider GMCR are set out in Section 6. It is not necessary to repeat them again but it is clear that the development will support the planning policy objectives of the Council to create a strong and stable economy in the borough [SCS Policy CS7]. In these circumstances, and accordance with the Framework, significant weight should be placed on the economic growth and jobs that will be created by the proposed development.

9.9 In terms of the location of the site, it is important to stress that the SCS [Policy CS7] specifically identifies Bredbury Industrial Estate as an area that has the opportunity to ‘provide sites for industrial and warehouse uses, due to the size of the plots, the proximity of the motorway network and the fact that there are few residential properties near to the core of the site’ and we note that a number of new small-scale developments have come forwards within the existing industrial park recently, namely the Southfield 25 Phase 3 and Bredbury 25 Trade Park Schemes. These schemes, along with the 3.96% vacancy rate demonstrate that the existing industrial estate is a viable employment location. However, there is no scope for the scale of development required to be accommodated within the existing site and, as discussed in Section 6 of this statement, the Bredbury Gateway site represents the only site capable of accommodating such development within both Stockport and Tameside. The proposed investment will raise the profile of the industrial estate and enhance its economic potential which is a strategic objective of the Council. It will also encourage further investment into the area.

Application Boundary

1.1 It is acknowledged that the application boundary includes additional land to that identified by the former draft GMSF allocation in the form of Finland Park Farm. However, there is strong rationale to support its inclusion. Including Finland Park Farm in the site boundary allows the development to create a new robust and defensible green belt boundary along the bank of the River Tame. Removing this land from the boundary would leave a small pocket of land bounded by three sides by built development. This would cease to serve any purpose or make any contribution to the Green Belt. As such, removing it would not result in minimising harm to the Green Belt.

1.2 In fact, the inclusion of the land actually helps the proposals to minimise the harm to the Green Belt as the strategic landscape buffer could not be provided without this land. The inclusion of the Finland Park Farm land allows this buffer to be delivered whilst maintaining economic viability. It also allows the development to make a greater contribution to biodiversity net gain than would have otherwise been the case. As such, in the balance of mitigation, the inclusion of the land has provided greater scope for additional measures that will help enhance the environment and result in a better scheme overall.

- 1.3 In terms of other benefits, the inclusion of the Finland Park Farm land will allow a greater proportion of jobs to be created at the site. The land is approximately 1.9 hectares [ha] in size which equates to approximately 6.1% of the total site area (30.90 ha). Not including this land within the site boundary would reduce the quantum of floorspace that can be delivered at the site by around 7,000 sqm. This is not insignificant and will allow the development to create a greater number of jobs. The increased level of job creation facilitated by the inclusion of Finland Park Farm within the application boundary is considered to offer significant additional economic benefits which strongly support its inclusion.
- 1.4 Finally, and as set out previously, the inclusion of the land will unlock the delivery of the new overspill car park for Stockport Sports Village which is another benefit of material significance. A total of 32 car parking spaces will be provided within a dedicated car park at the south-eastern edge of the site, close to the Sports Village. The provision of this facility has been proposed following consultation with the Council who have identified a need to relieve parking pressure within the residential streets surrounding the Sports Village in Woodley during match times.
- 1.5 Overall, we have clearly demonstrated that including the Finland Park Farm land within the application boundary has significant benefits which clearly outweigh the negatives, particularly given that omitting it would not minimise harm to the Green Belt in any case.

Conclusions on Principle of Development

- 9.10 As ‘very special circumstances’ have been demonstrated to justify the scheme, the development proposals comply with the requirements of the Framework [§143-144] and UDP [Policies GBA1.1 & GBA1.2]. In addition, the proposed investment will have significant benefits for the existing Bredbury Industrial Estate and thereby accord with the objectives and locational policies of the SCS [Policy CS7].

Highways & Transport

- 9.11 The Transport Chapter of the ES and the accompanying Transport Assessment has been prepared in support of the application proposals, based on the following key principles:
- 1 The traffic impacts of the site have been assessed on the local highway network based on an opening year of 2023 and a future year of 2028;
 - 2 Junction performance assessments have been undertaken at 8 off-site locations;
 - 3 The assessments have been based on bespoke trip rates derived specifically and fully validated for this development;
 - 4 Outputs from the VISSIM model have also been used to help determine future traffic flows on the local highway network; and,
 - 5 Detailed assessments of the site’s accessibility and sustainability have also been undertaken and included in the Transport Assessment.
- 9.12 The Transport Assessment demonstrates that the additional traffic that will likely be generated by the development can be accommodated on the surrounding highway network, subject to the implementation of a mitigation package. The proposed mitigation and additional improvements have been identified:
- 1 Upgrades and improvements at the Ashton Road/Bredbury Park Way Northern Junction, the Ashton Road/Bredbury Park Way Southern Junction, the M60 Junction 25 northern dumbbell roundabout and the M60 Junction 25 southern dumbbell roundabout as detailed in Section 8 of this report;
 - 2 A new dedicated car park to serve the Stockport Sports Village comprising 32 spaces;

- 3 The PRow's being diverted as part of the proposals will be subject to significant improvements and upgrades;
- 4 A section of Turner lane to the north-east of the site will also require diverting as part of the proposed development scheme. This route is not currently identified as a PRow or bridleway but is identified as a cycle route and sits within private land.
- 5 Enhanced pedestrian and cycle links between the site and Brinnington and Woodley;
- 6 A Community Travel Plan will be implemented and carefully monitored to reduce single occupancy car trips across the whole development, this includes a range of measures and initiatives to promote walking, cycling, public transport use and car sharing. A Framework Travel Plan is submitted alongside this application and will form the basis of the Full Travel Plan;
- 7 Cycle parking will be provided for each unit within the site;
- 8 New off-road footpaths and cycleways within the wider site to encourage walking and cycling for leisure, as well as connections to the wider public rights of way network beyond the site boundary will be provided; and,
- 9 Further financial contributions to be established through the consideration of the application and subsequent S106 negotiations.

9.13 It should also be noted that Turner Lane is designated as a 'Quiet Lane' under Saved Policy TD2.2 of the UDP. Saved Policy TD2.2 restricts development on rural lanes that would detract from their character and their value as 'Quiet Lanes'. As part of the development, this route will be upgraded to cater for pedestrians, cyclists and horse users.

9.14 Firstly, it is important to note that this policy is now considerably dated. It is therefore appropriate to consider its consistency with the Framework [§213]. In this instance, both the UDP and the SCS were adopted prior to the first iteration of the Framework. There is no provision within either the first iteration of the Framework or the current Framework which affords specific protection to rural lanes. As such, it is considered that Saved Policy TD2.2 is out-of-date when considered in the context of the Framework.

9.15 Notwithstanding this, the majority of the new route will sit within the strategic landscape buffer comprising native woodland planting which will provide an attractive and semi-rural environment for users of the upgraded footpath. Therefore, despite Saved Policy TD2.2 being considered out-of-date, the proposals for the diversion and upgrade of Turner Lane are still considered to comply with the broad principles of the policy to protect the character of 'Quiet Lanes'.

9.16 On the basis of the above, the proposed development therefore accords with the development plan [SCS Policies CS10, T-1 & T-3 and UDP Policy TD2.2] and the Framework [§102 & §111].

Design & Layout

9.17 The proposals have been developed following a comprehensive process of site survey, LVIA, market testing, design development and consultation. The Application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement, which explains the design principles that underpin the proposed scheme.

9.18 In summary, the design principles which have been followed in the formulation of the scheme are:

1 Scale Height & Massing

In response to the proximity of the application site to residential areas and the location of the site in the Green Belt, the applicant recognises the need to deliver a high-quality scheme that will add value to the borough. With this in mind, the proposals aim to create buildings which meet the functional requirements for industrial and distribution operations, which reflect the character of the area and build on the form of development within the adjoining Bredbury Park Industrial Estate. As detailed in Section 3 of this document and set out on the supporting Parameters Plan, maximum height restrictions vary to reflect the relative sensitivity of different parts of the site whilst also meeting with institutional standards for industrial and distribution buildings of this quantum of floorspace.

2 **Layout**

Approval is sought for the specific siting and detail associated with Units 1 and 2, along with the access and internal estate road serving the outline plots.

The detailed site layout for the outline element will be established through reserved matters, subject to the operational requirements of prospective end occupiers. However, the parameters established under this application ensure that buildings will be located on the site in a manner which will minimise any adverse impacts on the environment and represent an attractive addition to the existing Bredbury Park Industrial Estate.

The layout will maintain and reinforce existing boundary planting, with the retention and significant enhancement of the existing woodland through the provision of a strategic landscape buffer along the sites north and north-eastern boundary, adjacent to the River Tame which acts as a visual screen to the development area. Further screening will be provided with the introduction of a landscaped bund along the south-eastern boundary, adjacent to the Castle Hill Park which will assist in reducing visual impact to the existing properties and the wider landscape.

3 **Movement**

The development will provide a clear, legible and segregated vehicular movement strategy incorporating all road entrances, loading and vehicular parking areas. This will provide efficient movement patterns for HGV vehicles, improving efficiency for the occupier whilst also retaining a large flexible developable area on which to locate the buildings. Access for pedestrians and cycles will be via the main vehicular access, and by utilising the existing public right of way at Turner Lane which will connect with a proposed public footpath/bridleway running across the northern boundary of the site, adjacent to the River Tame.

4 **Views of the Site**

The development will ensure prominent building elevations are suitably treated to include appropriate materials & sensitive landscape treatment. A comprehensive landscaping strategy will be implemented to soften the development into its surrounding context and minimise impact on the environment. Building heights are also restricted to a lower level in the northern part of the site in order to reduce the visual impact on the Tame Valley.

- 9.19 The proposed development therefore accords with the relevant provisions of the development plan [SCS Policy CCS1 and Policy SIE.1], the guidance contained within the Sustainable Design & Construction SPD and the Framework [§127].

Landscape & Visual Impact

- 9.20 It is acknowledged that the height and scale of the proposed buildings and the nature of the surrounding topography mean that planting and ground modelling treatments will go a long way towards but will never totally screen the visual impacts of the built form from all

viewpoints. The design will seek to minimise the effects by sympathetic integration of the proposed development into the surrounding environment. This will be achieved through a combination of careful consideration of the site layout, choice of materials and colours and by setting the whole facility within a strong landscape framework appropriate to the location. It should also be noted that the proposed development will form a natural extension to the existing, dated industrial buildings.

9.21 A comprehensive landscape and visual impact assessment has been carried out for the proposed development as part of the ES. It reviews the existing baseline conditions, assesses the potential effects and outlines design and mitigation proposals incorporated as part of the overall proposed development. It has been undertaken within the context of the proposals, development parameters and details outlined elsewhere within the planning application.

9.22 The main conclusions of the Landscape & Visual Impact Chapter of the ES are:

Landscape Impacts

- 1 The magnitude of the change upon landscape character and some landscape features will be high. The site's landscape will change from one of largely agricultural use to one of largely employment-based use.
- 2 Development of the type proposed will extend the built edge of Bredbury slightly further north towards the Tame valley, although this is already a well-developed river corridor both to the north and south in the vicinity of the Site.
- 3 In general, the landscape effects of the completed development will lessen over time with the successful establishment and maturing of the significant levels of proposed planting within the strategic landscape buffer. The application of appropriate long-term management and maintenance operations to the existing conserved tree belts, hedgerows and woodland (particularly that which borders the Tame valley) will also deliver some localised benefits.
- 4 Existing boundary vegetation will be retained and enhanced, merging naturally with the strategic landscape buffer. Tree belts, linear woodland and hedgerows are incorporated into the Development's Green Infrastructure and enhanced and reinforced as part of the Site's landscape proposals.
- 5 The Development seeks to incorporate incidental green space, connected by green links and corridors through the Site and along Site boundaries.
- 6 Some existing public rights of way crossing the Site will be re-directed through the proposed development, maintaining connections across the Site between the A6017, Bredbury Industrial Estate, Bredbury / Woodley and the Tame Valley.
- 7 Building heights and scales have been carefully considered in order to sympathetically relate the Development both to the adjacent land uses and into its local landscape.

Visual Impacts

- 8 Views towards the proposed development from settlement and properties will not be extensive. Relatively close views will largely be confined to properties within Castle Hill Park, the Stockport Sports Village and from a limited number of farm houses and dwellings located Ashton Road/Arden Road.
- 9 The successful establishment and maturing of the planting and habitat creation proposals, particularly throughout the perimeter landscape strategy areas will provide localised benefits to some of the receptors with views towards the proposed development. These primarily comprise residents in close proximity to the south-eastern boundary of the Site, users of the PRow at short distance to the south, north-east and north-west, and road users

along the A6017. At these locations, the maturing of the perimeter woodland, tree and hedgerow planting will assist in screening and filtering any available views towards the highest parts of the units within the development.

10 As reinforcement planting along the north-eastern boundary matures it will also assist in visually integrating the proposals through further screening in conjunction with the existing woodland along the slopes to the south of the River Tame.

9.23 Overall, the significant landscape effects are considered to be predominantly localised and contained due to the highly urbanised nature of much of the Site's setting. Given the scale of the proposals visual effects are likely to be experienced across much of the surrounding landscape, however it is considered that significant effects, are confined to receptors within or adjacent to the Site. It is therefore concluded that the proposed development complies with the development plan [SCS Policy CS8 and Policy SIE-3] and the Framework [§127].

Biodiversity

9.24 The Biodiversity Chapter of the ES notes that the application site is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory conservation designations although three statutory protected sites lie within 1km of the site. The closest is Hulmes & Hardy Woods and Lower Haughton Meadows Local Nature Reserve [LNR], which lies on the opposite bank of the River Tame (approximately 50 metres from the site).

9.25 The majority of the site comprises habitats that are of low to negligible ecological value, particularly within the construction zone. The clearance and loss of species-poor improved grassland, amenity grassland, hardstanding, buildings, and small patches of scrub and ruderal vegetation will be of negligible significance at site level.

9.26 Faunal surveys have confirmed that a range of species utilise the site, albeit such usage is typically over limited areas and involving often small populations.

9.27 In relation to legally protected species, badgers exist on site and these are the main protected species constraint. However, adequate mitigation will be designed into the scheme and implemented prior to any construction taking place and the mitigation zone will be protected during construction with a Construction Environmental Management Plan [CEMP] and a method statement, which forms part of the licensable works. No evidence of bat activity was identified on the site. Any loss of foraging and commuting habitat would be mitigated for with sensitive lighting schemes and retention and enhancement of linear habitats.

9.28 Whilst there will be some requirements for advanced mitigation, such mitigation is typically on a small-scale and is essentially to address legal requirements in relation to individual animals as opposed to larger scale threats to local populations. These measures will be adopted in accordance with best-practice and will give due regard to national and local biodiversity priorities.

9.29 The site layout will seek to retain as much identified vegetation as possible within and around the edge of the site in order to protect and retain existing wildlife habitats. Where necessary, additional landscaping will be implemented to bolster vegetation, provide additional screening and create new environments for ecologically friendly conditions within the site.

9.30 It is also important to note that biodiversity offsetting is to be provided at the nearby Woodhall Fields which will be improved from poor condition to good condition and deliver a Biodiversity Net Gain of 11% (calculated using the Biodiversity Metric 2.0 Beta Test December 2019 Update). This represents a significant benefit and is a material consideration in the determination of the application.

- 9.31 When considering the proposed development in context with the proposed mitigation, the ES Chapter concluded that the residual effects on all ecological receptors will be negligible. It is therefore considered that the proposed development complies with the development plan [SCS Policy CS8 and Policy SIE-3] and the Framework [§175].

Arboriculture

- 9.32 The Arboriculture Chapter of the ES and associated Arboricultural Impact Assessment [AIA] identifies nine individual trees, sixteen tree groups, one woodland, and five hedges on the site. The Tree Survey identifies the trees and hedgerows that will be retained and lost on the detailed application area and those that will likely be retained and lost on the outline application area although this will be established in detail at the reserved matters stage.
- 9.33 New trees will be provided at a level which exceeds those lost as a result of the development, resulting in a net gain. For those trees being retained, tree protection fencing will be erected to an agreed specification in advance of the commencement of the development in accordance with the recommendations of the ES Chapter and AIA. Key areas where works are proposed within or immediately adjacent to retained trees will also be subject to root protection areas.
- 9.34 Overall the ES Chapter concludes that whilst the development will result in some major adverse effects in respect of trees, the implementation of mitigation measures as recommended will reduce the significance of potential impacts. It is therefore concluded that the development complies with the development plan [SCS Policy SIE-3] and the Framework [§175].

Noise & Vibration

- 9.35 The aspects of the development that could give rise to noise and vibration are the site clearance and construction works, additional road traffic (including HGV movements), operations within the development site (such as the arrival and unloading of vehicles) and building services plant associated with new industrial units. It should be noted that the Council were engaged at the early stages of the project and that the survey and assessment methodology was agreed in full prior to the preparation of the ES Chapter.
- 9.36 The assessment is based on the closest noise sensitive receptors which comprise residential dwellings located to the north, west, south and south-east of the site. The locations of the receptors are identified on Figure E5.1 of the ES Chapter.
- 9.37 The Noise & Vibration Chapter of the ES concludes that:
- 1 Construction vibration levels will fall significantly below those that might give rise to cosmetic building damage, and only have the potential to give rise to Minor Adverse effects at the worst affected dwellings near to the site.
 - 2 A detailed noise model of the site was created to predict worst case noise levels based on the illustrative masterplan to establish whether the derived noise level limits could reasonably be achieved. The modelling exercise predicted a Moderate Adverse effect, when not accounting for mitigation measures. When accounting for acoustic barriers around service yard areas associated with the scheme, the residual effect is reduced to Minor Adverse at worst and the criteria agreed with the Council are predicted to be achieved.
 - 3 Noise level changes resulting from development generated road traffic are predicted to have a Minor Adverse effect at the nearest noise sensitive dwellings at worst.
 - 4 A range of best practice mitigation measure well be applied during the construction of the scheme in order to minimise the impact at noise sensitive receptors.

- 5 In order to reduce operational noise levels at the nearest noise sensitive receptors, localised acoustic barriers will be incorporated into the design of the scheme.

9.38 It is concluded that the development will not give rise to any significant adverse effects in relation to noise and vibration and therefore the proposed development complies with the development plan [SCS Policy CS1 and Policy CS8] and the Framework [§180]. It is not envisaged that it is necessary to place any operational restrictions in the way of planning conditions on the site at this stage which could potentially hamper occupier requirements. Further assessment of noise will support any subsequent reserved matters applications.

Air Quality

9.39 The main issues associated with the proposed development and its effects on local air quality will occur during the construction phase and the operational phase (i.e. once the development is complete). The air impacts of the construction phase will arise from dust and particulate matter [PM₁₀] generated by site clearance, construction and landscaping.

9.40 The operation of the proposed development will generate an increase in traffic on the local road network and nitrogen dioxide [NO₂]. An assessment of the effect of this increase in road traffic was undertaken at a number of locations on and around the proposed development site.

9.41 The Air Quality Chapter of the ES concludes that:

- 1 The site is not located within an Air Quality Management Area [AQMA], although the M60 is identified as an AQMA.
- 2 There is a risk of dust nuisance as a result of the construction activities associated with the proposed development. However, a package of mitigation measures will be implemented, which will be set out in a Construction Environmental Management Plan [CEMP], in order to reduce the risk of effects. The overall effects during construction are judged to be 'not significant'.
- 3 Concentrations of PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ releases have been predicted at the worst-case location within the proposed development site. Predicted concentrations are well below the air quality objectives and the effects of road traffic emissions on future residents are thus considered to be negligible.

9.42 It is concluded that the development will not give rise to any significant adverse effects in relation to air quality and therefore the proposed development complies with the development plan [SCS Policies CS1, CS8 and SIE.1] and the Framework [§181].

Flood Risk & Drainage

9.43 The Flood Risk and Drainage ES Chapter concludes that:

- 1 The entirety of the site is located within Flood Risk Zone 1, where the annual probability of river and sea flooding is less than 1:1000 (0.1%). The site is therefore sequentially preferable in terms of the Framework. Employment uses are therefore appropriate in this zone.
- 2 In order to ensure there is no increase in surface water runoff as a result of the development, the runoff rate will be controlled, and sustainable drainage systems used to accommodate the 1 in 100 years plus 40% CC storm event in line with local and national policy.
- 3 It is proposed that the site continues to drain into the River Tame along the site's north-eastern boundary. It is proposed that the discharge rate from the development is limited for all storm events up to and including the 100-year return period.

- 4 It is proposed that the principle Sustainable Drainage Systems [SuDS] system for the development will be made up of ponds, swales or detention basins to attenuate, convey and treat surface water run-off prior to discharge from site. These are likely to be located in the north-eastern extent of the site adjacent to the River Tame.
- 5 Correspondence with United Utilities suggests that local network and treatment works should have sufficient capacity to receive foul flows from the development which will be allowed to drain to the public combined sewer network at an unrestricted rate. The proposed point of connection to the existing foul sewer network will be established at the reserved matters stage.

9.44 It is therefore considered that the proposed development complies with the development plan [SCS Policy SIE3] and the Framework [§163 & 165].

Historic Environment & Archaeology

9.45 A desk based Archaeological Assessment has been undertaken by CgMs and supports the application. The assessment has established that there are no designated heritage assets within the study site.

9.46 With regards to designated heritage assets in the surrounding area, the Grade II Listed Castle Hill Farmhouse is located approximately 100 meters to the east of the site and is considered to be at potential risk of impacts due to its setting. However, intervening views between the building and the study site are heavily filtered by existing vegetation and any potential impacts are considered to be minor and certainly equate to much less than substantial harm.

9.47 In relation to the sites potential for the presence of archaeological remains, the assessment found the potential to be high for the prehistoric period and low for all other periods. The significance of any currently unknown archaeological remains is yet to be determined.

9.48 It is considered that the archaeological implications of the proposed development can be addressed by an appropriately worded planning condition requiring a programme of archaeological work to be undertaken prior to development commencing.

9.49 It is therefore considered that the proposed development complies with the development plan [SCS Policy CS8 and Policy SIE-3] and the Framework [§189-190].

Ground Conditions

9.50 Historical mapping in 1871 indicates Bredbury Colliery was located in the south-eastern portion of the site with two mine shafts, pit head buildings, and associated spoil heaps in the immediate surrounding area with associated ponds.

9.51 The Tier 1 human health risk assessment associated with the Ground Conditions ES Chapter identified the presence of asbestos fibres and TPH compounds within the sub-surface at the location of one of the former mineshafts. Whilst the presence of asbestos was localised within the site, its presence across the wider site cannot be discounted without undertaking further detailed site investigation work to fully determine the existing baseline conditions. Upon completion of these works, an Options Appraisal and detailed Remediation & Enabling Works Strategy will be compiled specifying the mitigation measures designed to break the identified pollutant linkages. Prior to construction works commencing on site a Remediation Strategy will be submitted to the Local Authority and Environment Agency for approval. The ES Chapter concludes that subject to complying with the recommendations there is no reason why this minor constraint cannot be overcome.

9.52 The Proposed Development will be constructed in accordance with a CEMP which will be prepared and submitted to the Council for their approval prior to development/decommissioning commencing.

9.53 It is therefore considered that the proposed development complies with the development plan [SCS Policy SIE-3] and the Framework [§178].

Minerals

9.54 The application site is located within a mineral safeguarding area for shallow coal, brick clay, sand and gravel as defined by the GMJMP. In accordance with the GMJMP, a Mineral Resource assessment has been undertaken by Wardell Armstrong and supports this application.

9.55 The assessment identifies that geological plans of the area show that there is a small superficial deposit of glaciofluvial sand and gravel on the western part of the site, which is a safeguarded resource. The solid geology or bedrock comprises the Lower and Middle Coal Measures which are safeguarded in the Minerals Plan for “Brick clay with surface mined shallow coal”.

9.56 Policy 8 of the GMJMP sets out the relevant minerals safeguarding policy and restricts development within non-mineral development within Mineral Safeguarding Areas that do not allow for the prior extraction of minerals unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal accords with a number of exemptions, including if it can be demonstrated that it is not environmentally acceptable or economically viable to extract the Mineral or if it can be established that the mineral is either not present or there is no economic value in extracting it.

9.57 In this instance, the assessment concludes that the coal which underlies the site has been worked since the mid-late 19th century, so it is reasonable to assume that little, if any, of the original in situ coal resource remains and even if it did, the quantity would be so limited that it would not be economically viable to extract (or environmentally viable due to proximity to existing residential and commercial properties). It is also concluded that the sand and gravel deposit is too small to be worth extracting, so it has no economic value.

9.58 It is therefore considered that the proposed development complies with GMJMP [Policy 8] and the Framework [§206].

Energy

9.59 An Energy Statement has been prepared by EDP and supports the application. A detailed Energy Strategy for the site will be established through a planning conditions attached to the detailed element of the proposals and at the reserved matters stage for the outline element. A detailed feasibility study will be undertaken to establish what is achievable in line with energy reduction targets. However, in accordance with Policy SD-3 of the SCS, the Energy Statement sets out how consideration has been given to the inclusion of microgeneration and low carbon technologies in order to reduce CO₂ emissions.

9.60 The Energy Strategy will be developed in accordance with Policy SD-3 of the SCS and the associated Stockport Low Carbon Design Guidance [LCDG]. Building regulations set a minimum Target Emissions Rate [TER] and Stockport’s policy targets are expressed as the percentage of carbon reduction over and above the minimum TER. At this stage, it is proposed that the development will adopt the following preliminary targets for carbon reduction:

- 1 Minimum Target - 40% beyond 2006 TER (or the 2014 [current] Building Regs TER whichever is the higher); and,
- 2 Maximum Target - 85% beyond 2006 TER.

- 9.61 In order to achieve this the development will utilise a range of Energy Demand Minimisation Measures including, but not limited to passive solar design, natural ventilation measures, daylight maximisation, optimal insulation, air tightness, high efficiency plant and improved heating/lighting control. The detailed package of measure will be established at reserved matters to ensure that the carbon reduction targets are met in accordance with Policy SD-3 of the SCS.
- 9.62 Policy SD-4 of the SCS sets out the Council's aspirations to take advantage of opportunities to install district heating across the Borough. Until end users and detailed energy and heat requirements become known, it is not possible to establish the viability or otherwise of adopting existing heat networks or creating a new one and this matter will be considered at the reserved matters stage.
- 9.63 Whilst sufficient detail does not exist at this stage to establish a detailed Energy Strategy for the development, it is considered that the proposed development complies with overarching principles of contained within the relevant policies of the development plan [SCS Policy CS1, SD-3 and SD-4] and the Framework [§151].

Sustainability

- 9.64 In light of the climate crisis, there is an ever-increasing responsibility on developers to ensure that new development responds to these significant challenges by incorporating measures to reduce the environmental impacts during both the construction and operational phases.
- 9.65 The application is accompanied by a New Development Certification Note produced by The Planet Mark which sets out the significant environmental measures Quorum are committing to which go above and beyond usual expectations. The Planet Mark are sustainability consultants and have been enlisted to assist in creating an exemplar development with the highest sustainability credentials.
- 9.66 The Planet Mark certification recognises continuous improvements, encourages action and builds an empowered community of like-minded individuals. Organisations across the UK and beyond are choosing The Planet Mark to accelerate their commitments and actions to contribute more to society and the environment. Bredbury Gateway would be the first development within the North-West to achieve The Planet Mark accreditation.
- 9.67 As part of securing The Planet Mark certification, Quorum are committing to incorporating measures from a substantial carbon reduction checklist. Further details are set out within the New Development Certification Note.
- 9.68 Quorum are committed to ensuring that the Bredbury Gateway development is as green as possible, minimising carbon emissions and where possible providing enhancements.
- 9.69 The proposed development fully accords with national legislation and local plan policies in relation to carbon reduction and where possible these targets will be exceeded.

Utilities

- 9.70 A Utilities Statement has been prepared by EDP and supports the application. Given that this application is in hybrid, with outline approval only sought across the majority of the site, the Utilities Statement focusses on identifying potential locations of existing services and capacity for extension to serve the new development, with detailed arrangements to be established through planning conditions and reserved matters. Preliminary applications have been made to Utility Companies which have confirmed that there is adequate capacity within the existing Utility networks to accommodate the loads required for the worst-case scenarios.

9.71 At present there is no gas or electricity infrastructure on the site and new connections will be established to serve the development. An existing water main runs across the SE corner of the site and at the reserved matters stage, the route of this main will be reviewed with United Utilities to determine all necessary protection measures required during construction.

9.72 The Utilities Statement confirms that there are no significant utilities present on site or any supply capacity problems that would cause any obstacle to the development proceeding successfully. It is therefore considered that the proposed development complies with the overarching strategic principles of the development plan and Framework.

Lighting

9.73 An external lighting impact assessment has been prepared by EDP and provides an assessment of the impact that the lighting design might have on the existing site and surrounding sensitive receptors including nearby residential dwellings and habitat areas.

9.74 Lighting will be provided within the site to all access roads, parking areas, service yards and building entrances in line with British Standards, so as not to allow any areas of pooling/shadowing. Lighting to the site will display appropriate average lux levels in the region of 5.5 lux. Fittings will produce 'white' light, as opposed to yellow/orange light and will not be positioned to provide climbing aids over boundary treatments.

9.75 The Parameters Plan establishes a strategic landscape buffer zone around the majority of the site, including between the existing residential receptors and the future access road and buildings thereby reducing the risk of obtrusive light nuisance to residents. Additionally, the buffer zone coupled with the retention of established mature trees along the site boundaries will provide further protection from potential light spillage. In addition, all artificial lighting within loading areas will be directed towards the proposed buildings.

9.76 Additional detail associated with the proposed lighting scheme are included on the supporting External Lighting Assessment Plan (ref. 2556-E101 rev C). The detailed lighting proposals for the outline element of the application will be established at the reserved matters stage.

9.77 It is therefore considered that in respect of lighting, the proposed development will not have a significant impact on amenity and therefore complies with the development plan [SCS Policy SIE-3] and the Framework [§180].

Conclusions

9.78 There are 'very special circumstances' to justify the proposed development in the Green Belt, as required by the Framework [§143] and UDP [Policy GBA1.2]. These circumstances are sufficient to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt associated with the proposals (i.e. in relation to both 'inappropriateness' and 'other harm').

9.79 The proposed form of the development meets the requirements of the Framework [§144] and the proposed investment will have significant benefits for the Bredbury Park Industrial Estate and the wider Stockport Borough. It would accord with the objectives and locational policies of the SCS [Objective 3 and Policy CS7].

9.80 The proposed development complies with guidance contained relevant policies in the SCS and UDP with regards to design and layout, highways, amenity and other environmental matters.

9.81 Therefore, in accordance with the provisions of S38(6) of the 2004 Act, planning permission should be granted for the proposed development. The development plan compliance is supported by other material considerations which are considered in the following section.

10.0 Very Special Circumstances

Introduction

- 10.1 As set out previously, the Framework [§143-144] requires ‘very special circumstances’ to be present in order to justify development within the Green Belt. If an applicant demonstrates ‘very special circumstances’ and complies with other requisite requirements of the Framework and development plan, the presumption in favour of granting planning permission that complies with the development plan set out in s.38(6) of the 2004 Act will apply.
- 10.2 The High Court⁶ has held that a ‘very special circumstance’ must be more than run of the mill events and any applicant for permission must present evidence to demonstrate them. In this instance, the analysis of the ‘very special circumstances’ case for the extension to Bredbury Park Industrial Estate relates to the first three key planning issues considered in Section 6:
- 1 *Is there a need for additional employment development in Stockport?*
 - 2 *Is there land available to meet that need (considering land in the existing urban area, non-Green Belt land)?*
 - 3 *How does this site compare to other Green Belt sites?*
- 10.3 In accordance with the Framework [§144], in order to establish if very special circumstances exist, the consideration of the above then needs to be considered against the fourth, fifth and sixth key planning issues (considered in Sections 7, 8 & 9):
- “Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of **inappropriateness**, and **any other harm** resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.” [Lichfields emphasis]*
- 10.4 We have set out in the preceding sections our assessment of the harm arising from the fact that the proposed development is inappropriate development in the Green Belt. This includes both definitional harm, as well as an actual assessment of the degree of resultant harm due to the characteristics of the site, its context and proposed development. We have also considered all the technical aspects around the development and the potential for other harm. We have concluded that to a significant degree that harm can be fully mitigated.
- 10.5 This section goes on to summarise the significant benefits that the proposals will deliver to the economy and other local social and environmental benefits which are considered to cement the presence of very special circumstances in this instance.
- 10.6 As set out in our analysis above, an ELNA and an ASAS accompany the planning application and provide additional detail in relation to the ‘need case’. A market report (SIMA) has been prepared by JLL which sets out the availability of land in Stockport and the wider GMCR and the market demand for the type of facilities envisaged at Bredbury Gateway. This section provides an overview and summary of the key issues which form the ‘need case’. For further information and evidence please reference these reports which can be found in the supporting appendices to the Socio-Economics ES Chapter.

⁶ [2002] Doncaster MBC v Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions [EWHC 808]
[2005] West v First Secretary of State [EWHC 729]

The Need Case

- 10.7 As set out above, the need case at Bredbury Gateway relates to both the requirement to cater for the demands of the industrial and distribution industries and the overwhelming policy support for the principle of further such developments in Stockport. The Covid-19 pandemic and the need for Stockport to secure a robust economic recovery in its wake is also a material consideration.
- 10.8 The two key strands of need are clearly related, with the policy makers acknowledging the benefits of pursuing an increase in industrial and distribution and an acceptance that this can only be achieved through the release of land currently designated as Green Belt. Together they combine to present a strong need case for the development and represent a key contributor towards the ‘very special circumstances’ required to justify development at this Green Belt site.
- 10.9 The existing Bredbury Industrial Estate is Stockport Borough Council’s premier industrial estate and has a wide range of high-quality occupiers. It is almost at capacity and the current vacancy rate is significantly lower than the national average. The unique potential of the Bredbury Gateway to contribute to strategic employment development in the local economy has been recognised by the Council for a number of years by virtue of its proposed allocation within the now defunct GMSF. Our analysis has identified a very significant quantitative and qualitative shortfall of industrial and warehousing land in this part of South Manchester and Bredbury Gateway represents a unique opportunity to address this shortfall.
- 10.10 Concluding on need, all of the evidence presented in this report and the supporting submission documents demonstrates that there is an overwhelming need for additional land to for B2/B8 development in Stockport and particularly sites capable of delivering large scale industrial and logistics units.
- 10.11 The delay in the development plan process has meant it is necessary for Quorum to submit this application now, as there is an urgent need to provide the additional employment floorspace required by the market and identified by the Council in its evidence base. This has been further exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic and the increased demand and strain it has placed on the logistics sector. As such, the ‘need case’ is considered to contribute significantly to demonstrating that very special circumstances exist to justify the Bredbury Gateway development.

The Absence of Alternatives

- 10.12 As set out previously, an ASAS accompanies the planning application. It is supported by the SIMA prepared by JLL which sets out the availability of land in Greater Manchester and the market demand for the type of facilities envisaged at Bredbury Gateway. The Study clearly establishes that there are no alternative sites to Bredbury Gateway that could meet the need for large-scale industrial/distribution buildings to serve Greater Manchester and particularly Stockport where there is an acute shortage of suitable sites and premises which could deliver large-scale modern industrial and logistics units. It provides evidence that no other non-Green Belt site exists that could potentially meet the operational and policy need for such a facility. It also evaluates the availability of other Green Belt sites, to establish whether the locations could accommodate the facility with less of an impact upon the Green Belt and the wider environment.
- 10.13 The assessment, details of which are included under the ‘Alternative Sites Case’ heading above clearly concludes that that Bredbury Gateway is the only site capable of delivering the scheme. It has been clearly established that there are no alternative sites either within the urban area of more favourable Green Belt sites that could accommodate the proposed Bredbury Gateway

development. This is considered to contribute significantly to demonstrating that very special circumstances exist to grant planning permission for the proposed development.

Consideration of Alternative Options

- 10.14 As part of the assessment, consideration was also given to whether or not the need for a large-scale strategic employment development in Stockport could be met in an alternative manner. For example, through a combination of smaller scale developments across a multitude of sites. However, our assessment clearly demonstrates that there is no alternative option to Bredbury Gateway for meeting the economic development needs of Stockport Borough.
- 10.15 It is not suggested that only large-scale industrial/distribution developments will meet the needs of Stockport Borough. There are numerous examples of smaller developments/facilities making a valuable contribution to the economy such as the recent schemes in the Stockport at Aurora and S-Park. However, there is a particular need for an industrial/distribution development of the proposed scale which cannot be satisfactorily disaggregated if the efficiency of operations, the attractiveness to the industrial/distribution markets and financial viability are not to be prejudiced. This conclusion reinforces the findings of the review of policy context, that identifies a clear need for large-scale industrial and distribution buildings, rather than smaller, less efficient alternatives.

Other Very Special Circumstances

- 10.16 The application that has been submitted is part detailed and part outline. The detailed element of the application provides the Council with some certainty over deliverability and a commitment to the site and to the local community that granting planning permission on this site will have the following benefits.

Economic Benefits

- 10.17 The very special circumstances case to justify development at Bredbury Gateway also relates to the economic implications of the proposed development, in terms of the direct local, regional and national benefits. As referred to above, to accompany this application an economic impact assessment has been prepared within the ES, to quantify the economic implications arising from the development proposals. The proposed industrial and distribution development is likely to have the positive impact of improving the profile of the area and creating a strong image to stimulate further investment confidence.

Social Benefits

- 10.18 The community benefits associated with the proposals also contribute towards the very special circumstances case. These take the form of physical works (e.g. highways improvements), guarantees (e.g. land opened up for public access) and wider community benefits associated with the operation of the development (e.g. jobs).
- 10.19 Physical works that will deliver community benefits include:
- 1 The creation of a 32-space overspill car park for the Stockport Sports Village which currently experiences capacity issues that result in on-street parking issues around Lambeth Grove and Mill Lane.
 - 2 The creation of a high-quality public footpath/bridleway at the north of the site, running close to the southern bank of the River Tame.
 - 3 An attractive and carefully considered landscape scheme that will reduce the visual impacts of the development on the Tame Valley.

- 4 Junction improvement works at various locations to reduce the impacts on the existing highway network that will also result in improvements to the functioning of the surrounding highway network.
- 5 A range of off-site improvement works to enhance pedestrian and cycle links between the site with Brinnington and Woodley.

10.20 In addition, the proposals will significantly assist in addressing local deprivation issues that have been identified in the locality of the site.

10.21 Deprivation at the local level is measured by ONS's 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation [IMD], which uses a series of data to rank areas across seven domains that varies from income to health. These categories, combined together, produce a multiple deprivation score for each local area. In overall terms, Stockport ranks 154th out of 317 local authorities in England on the IMD 2019 (i.e. it is within the top half of the least deprived authorities in the country).

10.22 However, this Borough-wide metric masks severe deprivation issues within the immediate vicinity of the site.

10.23 Bredbury (where the site is located) conveys relatively high levels of deprivation. The site itself is located in an area that is in the 16% most deprived areas in England and Brinnington is made up of four Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs); Brinnington East (Stockport 004A), Brinnington West (Stockport 004B), Brinnington South (Stockport 004C) and Brinnington North (Stockport 004D). All four of Brinnington's LSOAs are amongst the 10% most deprived LSOAs (overall) in Stockport and fall within the 5% most deprived in England according to the 2019 IMD. The Brinnington West and North LSOAs are the 2nd and 3rd most deprived in the whole of Stockport (out of 190 LSOAs) and rank as the 69th and 90th most deprived nationally out of 32,482 areas (i.e. in the bottom 0.5% most deprived). The Brinnington West LSOA also fell within the 1% most deprived LSOAs nationally.

10.24 There are therefore significant levels of localised deprivation which access to large scale employment opportunities in the immediate vicinity, which the proposed Bredbury Park Gateway, could help to address, improving both the social and economic outcomes of local residents.

Environmental Benefits

10.25 It is acknowledged that the proposed development will have an environmental impact, and a full assessment of the environmental impact of the development is provided within the ES submitted to accompany the application.

10.26 However, whilst the erection of industrial/distribution buildings on the site will not be without environmental concerns, through proposed mitigation measures, the environmental impacts are reduced, and in certain circumstances, result in net benefits to environmental conditions. In particular, through implementation of an ecological mitigation scheme, involving landscaping enhancements integrated with the ecological habitat design, good practice construction methodologies, and the implementation of a sustainable urban drainage system, the proposed development will have a long-term positive impact on local ecological conditions particularly given the low existing biodiversity value of the majority of the application site. Furthermore, off-site ecological enhancements are proposed at the nearby Woodhall Fields which will result in the development delivering an overall biodiversity net gain of 11%. This is a significant benefit which should carry weight in the overall planning balance.

10.27 The proposed development will also have excellent sustainability credentials as set out within the Planet Mark New Development Certification Note.

Conclusions

- 10.28 The requirement to justify whether or not very special circumstances exist is clearly set out in the Framework [§144]. This involves a consideration of harm arising due to the inappropriateness of the development and any other harm. This has to be weighed against the benefits of the proposed development. It is considered that the proposals will give rise to significant economic benefits in particular. In other respects, the harm has largely been mitigated by the proposals as evidenced elsewhere in this Planning Statement as well as the Environmental Statement and other technical reports that accompany this application.
- 10.29 A detailed assessment has been undertaken as required by the Framework [§143-144] and the UDP [Policies GBA1.1 & GBA1.2]. In summary, the ‘very special circumstances’ case relates to:
- 1 An overriding need for the provision of large-scale industrial/distribution buildings in Stockport, to meet the needs of Stockport Borough, the wider GMCR, the Northern Powerhouse and the objectives of the LEP and local authorities;
 - 2 A lack of alternative sites that could accommodate large-scale industrial/distribution buildings within the established area of search in which the need to provide such a development exists;
 - 3 A lack of alternative options, other than the provision of large-scale industrial/distribution buildings, to meet the identified need; and,
 - 4 The economic, social and environmental benefits associated with the delivery of the scheme.
- 10.30 Having thoroughly considered the first six key planning issues, it has been clearly established that the substantial benefits listed above outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and that very special circumstances do exist to justify the development proposals at Bredbury Gateway (key planning issue seven). This conclusion is supported by both the Council and the wider GMCA evidence on the need for employment land. The proposed development is overwhelmingly supported by that evidence.

11.0 Sustainable Development

Introduction

- 11.1 Having first established that very special circumstances exist, this section considers the compliance of the proposed development with the principles of sustainable development as set out in the Framework [§7-8] (key planning issue 8). It demonstrates that the proposals perform a positive economic, social and environmental role and whilst the development cannot claim the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the Framework [§11], it should be given significant weight in the planning balance.

Economic Role

- 11.2 The proposed development will contribute to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy. In particular, the proposals will bring a number of economic and fiscal benefits in terms of job creation and increased expenditure in the local economy.

Economic Benefits During Construction

- 11.3 A number of economic benefits arise from the development proposed development during the construction phase.
- 11.4 The assumed construction cost of the proposed development equates to c.£77 million for both Scenarios 1 and 2, split between the construction of the buildings (£58 million), infrastructure (£7.5 million) and enabling works (£11.5 million). The construction value can be used to approximate the amount of construction employment that would be created by the schemes.
- 11.5 Based on HCA Labour Coefficients⁷ that estimate the number of Full Time Equivalent [FTE] years of construction employment per £1m investment, it is estimated that the construction of the proposed development will support 126 FTE construction jobs per annum on average during the construction phase.
- 11.6 National construction firms use a combination of their own permanent workforce and local contractors on projects, with a proportion of construction workers drawn locally. An Employment and Training Scheme will be produced to help to ensure that a proportion of the construction jobs created by the proposed development will be taken up by the local workforce.
- 11.7 In addition, it is also likely that some businesses in the local area, (as well as Greater Manchester and wider north-west economy generally), would benefit from the trade linkages that would be established to construct the development. This means that further indirect jobs would be supported locally from suppliers of construction materials and equipment. Local businesses would also benefit to some extent from temporary increases in expenditure as a result of the direct and indirect employment effects of the construction phase (e.g. construction workers visiting local shops and other facilities). It is estimated that an additional 189 temporary construction jobs could be supported by the proposed development in sectors across the UK economy annually.
- 11.8 The proposed development would make a significant contribution towards creating jobs in the sector. This could also lead to a reduction in the number of JSA claimants (which Stockport and Tameside has a relatively high percentage of, relative to regional and national averages), particularly those seeking employment in construction-related roles. The number of jobs created by the development are therefore likely to reduce local levels of unemployment in this sector.

⁷ HCA 2015 & NLP Employment Densities Guide 2016

Economic Benefits After Completion

- 11.9 The precise number of jobs that will be supported by the development will depend on the end-users that occupy the scheme. However, it is possible to estimate the level of employment generation by applying average employment densities to the proposed floorspace as per the HCA's 2015 Employment Density Guide 3rd Edition.
- 11.10 Using this guidance, it is estimated that between c.949 and c.1,518 jobs (FTE) could be directly supported by the proposed development. The Local Employment & Training Schemes, to be prepared by the future operators, will seek to ensure the local community gains most from these job opportunities.
- 11.11 The local area surrounding the site displays relatively high levels of deprivation, particularly Brinnington. The proposed development is likely to significantly enhance the socio-economic conditions of these local communities, particularly in terms of creating increased employment choice. There are several hotspots of deprivation in both Stockport and particularly Tameside, and the provision of additional jobs, both direct and indirect as a result of the proposed development will help to reduce deprivation in these areas, providing jobs that cover a wide range of skill levels across the industrial, distribution and office sectors.
- 11.12 The spending of wages by both employees on the site and of the local firms supplying goods and services to these companies will also support induced employment in other local shops, other services and other firms.
- 11.13 The scheme would also generate between £1.21 and £1.36 million per annum in Business Rates. The total fiscal benefits resulting from the development represent a considerable source of income at a time when Local Authorities are being forced to deal with the realities of substantial budgetary pressures.

Wider Economic Benefits

- 11.14 As set out previously, the development will have wider economic benefits including:
- 1 Enhancing the profile of and the image of Bredbury Park Industrial Estate as a major focus for the industrial and distribution sectors, and sending a strong signal of investment confidence in the area;
 - 2 It would help create a competitive advantage for Stockport Borough within the industrial and distribution sectors helping build a critical mass of such activities and encouraging further investment so that Stockport remains competitive within the GMCR and across the wider north-west against other areas with similar facilities;
 - 3 It would help maintain a diversified local economy in an area where mining and manufacturing has declined, and economic growth is a key driver for the area;
 - 4 Support wider regeneration programmes of the Council, including that of the Mayoral Development Corporation at the Town Centre West site by providing opportunities for local businesses, some of which are being forced to look outside the borough to relocate within it; and,
 - 5 It would improve the socio-economic outcomes of deprived areas within Stockport and Tameside by offering convenient new employment opportunities.
- 11.15 On this basis, the proposals will deliver substantial economic benefits, which should be given significant weight in the planning balance.

Social Role

- 11.16 The proposed development will support the creation of a strong, vibrant and healthy community by increasing the supply of local employment thereby helping to reduce unemployment rates in Stockport and Tameside.

Deprivation

- 11.17 Deprivation at the local level is measured by ONS's 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation [IMD], which uses a series of data to rank areas across seven domains that varies from income to health. These categories, combined together, produce a multiple deprivation score for each local area. In overall terms, Stockport ranks 154th out of 317 local authorities in England on the IMD 2019 (i.e. it is within the top half of the least deprived authorities in the country). In stark contrast, Tameside performs very poorly, ranking 23rd out of 317 local authorities. The Borough is therefore ranked in the lowest 7% of authorities nationally.
- 11.18 It is evident, however, that there are significant variations in deprivation across the two authorities. For instance, 20% of LSOA in Tameside are amongst the 10% most deprived in the country compared to 9% in Stockport.
- 11.19 Bredbury (where the site is located – Stockport 009B) is an area that experiences relatively high levels of deprivation. The site itself is located in an area that is in the 16% most deprived areas in England; whilst areas just to the west are in the worst 10%.
- 11.20 As a consequence, the employment generated by the proposed development will have a significant, and positive, impact on reducing deprivation in Bredbury and across the wider Stockport and Tameside boroughs. This is particularly the case as the lead contractor and future occupiers will have to prepare, and implement, Local Employment & Training Schemes to ensure local people gain the most from, the new job opportunities. This a significant and important social benefit of the proposed development.

Physical Works

- 11.21 The proposed development includes physical works (e.g. the creation of a new car park to serve Stockport Sports Village) and guarantees (e.g. land opened up for public access) which will also have social benefits. These include:
- 1 The creation of a 32-space overspill car park for the Stockport Sports Village which currently experiences capacity issues that result in on-street parking issues around Lambeth Grove and Mill Lane.
 - 2 The creation of a high-quality public footpath/bridleway at the north of the site, running close to the southern bank of the River Tame.
 - 3 An attractive and carefully considered landscape scheme, including the provision of a strategic landscape buffer that will reduce the visual impacts of the development on the Tame Valley.
 - 4 Junction improvement works at various locations to reduce the impacts on the existing highway network.
- 11.22 On this basis, the proposals will deliver substantial social benefits, which should be given significant weight in the planning balance.

Environmental Role

- 11.23 It is acknowledged that the erection of industrial and distribution buildings on the site will not be without environmental concerns. However, the environmental impacts are mitigated, and in certain circumstances, result in net benefits to environmental conditions.
- 11.24 In particular, through implementation of an ecological mitigation scheme, involving landscaping enhancements integrated with the ecological habitat design, good practice construction methodologies, and the implementation of a sustainable urban drainage system, the proposed development will have a long-term positive impact on local ecological conditions particularly given the low existing biodiversity value of the application site.
- 11.25 The ES submitted with the planning application provides a full assessment of the environmental impact of the development. It demonstrates that the proposed development will not harm the natural environment and will help to improve biodiversity as well as using natural resources prudently. In particular:
- 1 No designated nature conservation sites will be affected by the proposed development on this site;
 - 2 There are no designated assets (Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Registered Battlefields or Registered Parks and Gardens of special historic interest) on the site;
 - 3 The impact of the development on the wider landscape will be effectively mitigated by the retention and enhancement of existing landscaped areas surrounding the site and the creation of new landscape areas within and around the site which, where appropriate combined with the creation of bunds. A combination of these measures will significantly reduce the visual impact of the development and effectively screen the buildings;
 - 4 The implementation of a Sustainable Urban Drainage system which will be provided in the form of ponds, swales or detention basins to attenuate, convey and treat surface water run-off prior to discharge from site. These will be located in the lower, north-eastern extent of the site.
 - 5 The habitats across the majority of the site are overwhelmingly dominated by agricultural land which is species-poor and of low conservation value;
 - 6 The provision of landscaping enhancements to the existing site boundaries, particularly to the north of the site, adjacent to the River Tame banks which will have a long-term positive impact on local ecological conditions and increase biodiversity; and,
 - 7 The proposals will deliver a biodiversity net gain of 11%.
- 11.26 The applicant will adopt construction methods and design the building fabric to ensure that the development will result in zero carbon emissions and will reduce water usage and waste.
- 11.27 On this basis, the proposed development will not result in an unacceptable impact on any environmental resources and will have some benefits. Overall, the impact on the environment will be neutral or, at worst, a limited harm.

Conclusions

- 11.28 The proposed development will secure benefits to the economic and social roles with a neutral or limited adverse impact on the environmental role. As a consequence, the adverse impacts of permitting the development would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. Whilst the development cannot claim the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the Framework, it should be given significant weight in the planning balance.

12.0 **Planning Balance & Conclusion**

Development Plan

- 12.1 The starting point for the consideration of the Application must be whether the proposed development complies with the development plan. In this case the relevant policies are contained within the SCS and UDP.
- 12.2 There are ‘very special circumstances’ to justify the proposed development in the Green Belt, as required by the Framework [§143] and UDP [Policy GBA1.2]. These circumstances are sufficient to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt associated with the proposals (i.e. in relation to both ‘inappropriateness’ and ‘other harm’).
- 12.3 The proposed form of the development meets the requirements of the Framework [§144] and the proposed investment will have significant benefits for the Bredbury Park Industrial Estate and the wider Stockport Borough. It would accord with the objectives and locational policies of the SCS [Objective 3 and Policy CS7].
- 12.4 The proposed development complies with guidance contained relevant policies in the SCS and UDP with regards to design and layout, highways, amenity and other environmental matters.
- 12.5 Therefore, in accordance with the provisions of S38(6) of the 2004 Act, planning permission should be granted for the proposed development. The development plan compliance is supported by other material considerations which are considered in the following section.

Material Considerations

- 12.1 It has been established that the proposed development would contribute substantially towards addressing the very significant quantitative and qualitative shortfall of industrial and warehousing land in this part of South Manchester. Our ELNA has suggested that depending upon the scenario modelled, the provision of 93,184 sqm (or 20.71 ha) would make a vital contribution to addressing the 29-49 ha industrial/warehousing floorspace shortfall.
- 12.2 This Planning Statement considered whether there is a need for additional employment land in Stockport, if there is land available to meet that need, first considering non-Green Belt land and finally how the Application Site compares to other Green Belt sites. In this context, our assessment clearly demonstrated the following:
- 1 There is a significant need for additional employment land in Stockport;
 - 2 There are no sites located within the urban area which can assist in meeting this need; and,
 - 3 Having considered alternative Green Belt sites, it has been established that Bredbury Gateway is the only site capable of delivering the scheme.
- 12.3 Further to the above, it has been clearly demonstrated that the proposals represent sustainable development. The development will secure benefits to the economic and social roles with a neutral or limited adverse impact on the environmental role. As a consequence, the adverse impacts of permitting the development would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. Whilst the development cannot claim the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the Framework [§11], it should be given significant weight in the planning balance.
- 12.4 The proposed development will deliver substantial employment opportunities in an area of high unemployment and in need of economic growth. In the context of the severe deprivation issues

within this part of Stockport, it is considered that the provision of up to 1,518 FTE jobs on the application site should be given substantial weight.

- 12.5 Finally, the sites longstanding retention as a draft allocation within the now defunct GMSF demonstrates that the Council has thoroughly considered the need case for employment development in Stockport and made the same conclusions as those drawn within this assessment; namely that there is an overwhelming need for a large-scale strategic industrial and logistics development. It is simply the delays and significant uncertainty around the the development plan process that has meant it is necessary for Quorum to submit this application now, as there is an urgent need to provide the additional employment floorspace required by the market and identified by the Council in its evidence base. If this development does not come forwards now, there is a significant risk that Stockport will miss out on this once in a generation opportunity to attract significant investment into the borough that would not otherwise be possible. This is particularly pertinent in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Planning Balance

- 12.6 As a consequence, when considering the proposal in the context of S38(6) of the 2004 Act, the position is therefore that there is no conflict with SCS and UDP policies (because ‘very special circumstances’ have been demonstrated) and material considerations also weigh in favour of the development.
- 12.7 On this basis it is considered that planning permission should be granted without delay for this sustainable and much needed development.

Conclusion

- 12.8 **For the above reasons, the Council is urged to grant planning permission for the proposed development.**

Appendix 1: Site Location Plan



NOTES

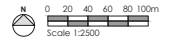
- All dimensions and levels are to be checked on site.
- Any discrepancies are to be reported to the architect before any work commences.
- This drawing shall not be scaled to ascertain any dimensions. Work to figured dimensions only.
- This drawing shall not be reproduced without express written permission from AEW.
- The overall drawings and ownership boundaries are produced using reasonable endeavours. AEW cannot be responsible for the accuracy or scale discrepancy of base plans supplied to them.
- All works are to be undertaken in accordance with Building Regulations and the latest British Standards.
- All proprietary materials and products are to be used strictly in accordance with the manufacturers recommendations.

CDM 2015

Client notified of duties: XX/XX/XXXX

Principal Designer: XXX

Unless noted below, all known hazards have been highlighted on the drawing.



F3 19/03/19 ES AL

Red line and site entrance amended to reflect highway improvements design

F2 01/10/18 TF DGH

Site access updated to latest Vectra layout: VM60707-D108

F1 23/03/18 SG AL

Initial Issue

REV Date Drawn by: Checked by:

Status Purpose of Issue

S2 For Information

drawing stage **Feasibility**

Client

Quorum Estates Limited

Project

Bredbury Gateway

drawing title

Location Plan

date 23/03/18 drawn SG

scale:all 1:2500 checked AL

Appendix 2: Commercial Enquiries Schedule



Property: Bredbury Gateway
Date: 10 December 2020

Occupier Expressions of Interest (Private)

Company	Size (sq ft)	Location	Comments/Actions
Parcel Delivery Company	300,000+	Greater Manchester	Consolidation exercise for national logistics operator. Opportunity led but Greater Manchester target location.
Cosmetics business	100,000	South Manchester	Looking to relocate from existing premises in Trafford Park. Previously considered site at Manchester Airport.
Online beauty and wellbeing company	100,000 – 150,000	Greater Manchester / Cheshire	Further expansion for on-line retailer with significant presence at Manchester Airport
Pharmaceutical company	50,000+	South Manchester	Currently based in Cheadle in a number of units. Consolidation exercise plus future expansion.
Hi-tech manufacturing company	60,000	South Manchester	Currently based in Heaton Mersey. Hybrid unit with high office content required.
Door manufacturer	100,000 -150,000	South Manchester	Macclesfield based business looking for new facility to consolidate manufacturing and warehousing operations.
Parcel delivery company	50,000 – 100,000	South Manchester	Parcel delivery operations looking for additional facility to support recent growth.
c/o CBRE	100,000 – 150,000	Greater Manchester	On behalf of a large Plc end user. B8 use. Low site density.
c/o CBRE	100,000	South Manchester	On behalf of worldwide e-commerce delivery company. Cross docked operation.
Trailer manufacturer	60,000 – 80,000	South Manchester	German trailer manufacturer looking to open new UK manufacturing site. Minimum 10m eaves and large yard.
Hi-Fi retailer	75,000 – 100,000	East/South Manchester	Currently in 3PL space and looking to bring warehousing in-house. Preference for new build.
Conveyor manufacturer	30,000 – 40,000	South/East Manchester	Manufacturer based in High Peak and looking to relocate close to M60 and Manchester.
Furniture manufacturer	50,000	South Manchester	Currently based in Cheadle. Under offer on spec build at Novus, Knutsford due to no local opportunities.



Occupier Expressions of Interest (Private and Confidential)

Company	Size (sq ft)	Location	Comments/Actions
Hilti	100,000 – 150,000	Stockport & Surrounds	Long standing Bredbury based occupier. Seeking larger unit for distribution side of the business. Taken 100,000 sq ft in Carrington. Selling existing unit on Bredbury Industrial Estate. Quorum had discussions to take land at Bredbury Gateway but requirement was urgent and no other options in Stockport so have re-located to Trafford.
Grease manufacturer	85,000	Stockport	Re-location from town centre site due to be developed for Town Centre West regeneration scheme. Would like to stay in Stockport. Bredbury Gateway of interest if timings work. NB. They are considering sites in Tameside and Oldham due to lack of availability in Stockport. Significant job numbers. Ongoing dialogue with Quorum.
Wood finish manufacturer	25,000	Woodley / Bredbury	Based in second-hand accommodation with desire to re-locate to more modern building. Opportunity driven.
c/o Davies Harrison	40,000 – 60,000	Stockport	Freehold requirement for Stockport. Taking additional unit on Castlehill to support short term expansion.
Household and healthcare manufacturer	60-100,000	Bredbury	Expanding company based on existing industrial estate. Currently occupy three separate units due to lack of suitable units. Likely requirement for up to 100,000 sq ft in next 2-3 years. Have taken additional space on Castlehill but still looking for single facility.
APS Logistics	100,000	Stockport / South Manchester	Based on Birdhall lane, Cheadle. Require more space for distribution use. Currently considering space in Wythenshawe due to lack of available options in Stockport. Taken 90,000 sq ft new build at Preston Brook, Runcorn.
WFEL	60-100,000	Stockport	Manufacturer based in Heaton Chapel. Longstanding requirement still not satisfied. Under offer on 50,000 sq ft at Crossly Park.
c/o Williams Sillitoe	30,000	Stockport	On behalf of hi-tech company based on Bredbury Industrial Estate. Lease expiry in 1 year. Timing suitable for Bredbury Gateway.
Roof sheet manufacturer	60,000	East Manchester	Currently based in Glossop. Direct enquiry about the site due to lack of sites in Tameside. Timing not suitable for Bredbury.



			Pursuing alternative sites available immediately. Still live.
Catering supplies company	60,000	Stockport	Long standing requirement. Based in Hazel Grove. Attended public consultation and expressed interest in BG. Requirement still not satisfied. Preference to purchase.
Swizzels	450,000	As close as possible to New Mills HQ	Extensive discussions held between Quorum, SMBC and Swizzels re. Bredbury Gateway but concerns over timing of planning at Bredbury. Exchanged contracts to take c. 30 acres at Middlewich, Cheshire East. Building under construction.
c/o Savills	75,000-100,000	Stockport	On behalf of existing long-time occupier on Bredbury Industrial Estate. Quorum have met with occupier. No alternative sites available in Stockport, so recently viewed sites in Oldham and Rochdale. They would like to stay in Bredbury or Stockport. Negotiations ongoing to extend current lease on short term basis as nothing suitable available. Bredbury Gateway would suit if they can extend current lease. Lease extended on short term basis due to lack of available properties.
Window manufacturer	240,000	South Manchester	Now located at Denton, but previously occupied Bredbury Industrial Estate. Underlying requirement to relocate to expand current facility. Director's and staff mainly Stockport based.
L'Oréal	600,000 plus 200,000 expansion	South / West Manchester	For relocation of Trafford Park and part of Bury facilities. Agreed terms to take new facility at South Heywood. Only deliverable site suitable for their size requirement in Greater Manchester.



Comparable Greenbelt Sites in Greater Manchester / North West

Site	Size (sq ft)	Local Authority	Developer	Comments/Actions
South Heywood	1.5M sq ft commercial 1,000 homes	Rochdale	Russell Construction	This greenbelt site was granted outline consent in April 2018. The application was not called in, and a reserved matters application for the commercial element has now been granted. The site was included in the previous GMSF. Terms agreed for D&B of 600,000 sq ft plus 200,000 sq ft expansion to L'Oréal.
Symmetry Park, Wigan, J25, M6	1.44M sq ft logistics	Wigan	DB Symmetry	The site is included in the previous GMSF. Hybrid application submitted and approved. Called in by Secretary of State. Inspectors decision due Q2 2021.
Land to rear of Wingates Industrial Estate	c. 1.5M sq ft	Bolton	Harworth Estates	This greenbelt site is located at the rear of Wingates and borders Logistics North development currently a large scale logistics park. The final plot of Logistics North has now sold. This has brought in region of 3-4,000 jobs to Bolton / Trafford and occupiers are well advanced. The site is included in the previous GMSF. Outline application approved. Called in by Secretary of State. Inspectors decision due Q2 2021.
Florida Farm, Haydock	1.4M sq ft	St Helens	Bericote	This former greenbelt site was granted outline consent in 2017 for upto 1.4m sq ft of B2 & B8. This was achieved on a speculative basis, without any named occupiers. The case was not called in. Pre let completed to Amazon for a new 330,000 sq ft new build facility, plus spec build of 525,000 sq ft let to Kellogg's
Appleton Thorn, Warrington	200 acres Est. 2.5m sq ft	Warrington	PGIM / Langtree	Planning application expected end 2018. Application due at committee in October with recommendation for approval.

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