

DELEGATED REPORT

Report by Jennie Townsend	Date of report: 31/10/2025	Ref: 72285/FUL
Registration: 09/09/2025	LDfC: 10/10/2025	Expiry Date: 04/11/2025
Site Visit: 23/09/2025	Site Notice: 23/09/2025	Press Date: N/A
Objections: 40	Con Area:	Adv Type: PI
Reason for Delay: N/A		EIA: NA
		Dec Level: DEL
		Stat Class: MIDW

Proposal: Residential development - 7 no. dwellings including associated access road, parking, private amenity space, boundary treatments and landscaping

Location: Land to south of Mount Pleasant, Prestwich, Manchester, M25 2SD

Description

The application site relates to 0.44 hectares of land which is located close to Simister Village and is designated Green Belt and a Landscape Character Area.

To the north of the site is Mount Pleasant, a residential cul-de-sac, a single dwelling to the south which was formally a stables and has now been converted to a dwelling (ref 65090) and a large pond to the north west. Other than that the site is surrounded by Green Belt, open land and fields.

The site itself is irregular in shape, vacant and overgrown with vegetation and there is no formal access to it as such.

This application seeks a residential development for 7 no dwellings including associated access road, parking, amenity space, boundary treatment and landscaping.

The proposed built development would utilise approximately half the whole site area, sited in the north western part of the site. There would be 5 x3 storey terraced dwellings (units 1-5) located in a row in the western corner of the site and a pair of 2 storey semi-detached dwellings (Units 1-2) more centrally positioned in the site.

The access to the site would continue from the Mount Pleasant cul -de-sac and lead to a turning head before it would continue round the semi-detached houses and along the fronts of the row of 5 dwellings. The access would terminate at the northern boundary in front of unit 5.

Each property would have a small front garden and larger private rear garden with 2 driveway parking spaces and separate areas for bin storage.

The 5 terraced dwellings would be 3 storey and provide living accommodation at the ground floor, 2 x bedrooms and bathroom at first floor and 1 no bedroom at the second floor in the roof space and rear dormer.

The pair of semi-detached would provide living accommodation at the ground floor and 2 no bedrooms and a bathroom at the first floor.

The remainder of the site to the north east and south of the proposed development would be retained for landscaping and ecology purposes.

Relevant Planning History

54589 - Retrospective application for change of use of part of field to riding menage -

Approved 23/12/2011

Publicity

Letters sent on 19/9/25 to 65 properties.

Site notice posted 23/9/25

40 objections received with the following issues -

Green Belt and infill justification

- The land contains only one dwelling and was historically used as farm/stabling land. This does not equate to a gap in an otherwise built-up frontage that requires "infilling." Proposing seven new dwellings on what is essentially open green space goes far beyond what could reasonably be described as "very limited infilling in villages."
- Building new dwellings in the Green Belt constitutes inappropriate development which is defined as harmful and should not be approved except in very special circumstances no such circumstances have been demonstrated
- Allowing this would set an unwelcome precedent for further greenfield development in Simister

Affordable Housing JP-H2

- Policy JP-H2, which requires that new developments contribute towards affordable housing targets by significantly increasing the supply of genuinely affordable homes.
- No information has been provided about the intended sale prices of these dwellings, but given local property values and the form of the development, it does not appear that they would fall within the affordable category. As such, the scheme does not appear to make any contribution towards local affordable housing needs.

Sustainability

- Economic: There is no evidence that this small development will provide any significant economic benefits to the village, beyond short-term construction activity.
- Social: The applicant claims that the development will contribute to the local community of residents in line with the social objective. However, no clear explanation has been provided as to how these new homes will deliver genuine social benefits. On the contrary, the scheme would place additional pressure on local infrastructure, increase traffic on a narrow cul-de-sac, and create noise and disturbance that would reduce the quality of life for existing residents. Without affordable housing provision, community facilities, or demonstrable social benefits, the proposal does not meet the social objective.
- Environmental: The applicant refers to soft landscaping proposals intended to improve the setting and biodiversity of the site. While welcome in principle, such measures cannot compensate for the permanent loss of openness and green space in the Green Belt, or the environmental harm caused by intensifying development on previously open land. Landscaping around new houses does not equate to protecting biodiversity on undisturbed land.

Traffic issues

- The cul de sac is narrow and space on the street is tight as it is without construction vehicles going up and down
- If the homes are built the added traffic in and out of Mount Pleasant will be greatly increases.
- The village itself has one road in and out which again is tight and crowded at best.
- Would lead to congestion and potential safety hazards especially for children and elderly pedestrians
- Increased traffic within a small cul de sac
- No clear demonstration in the application of how traffic flows, visitor parking, or service/emergency vehicle access will be safely managed. In such a constrained location, this is a significant omission.
- Unacceptable level of noise and disturbance to existing residents, both during

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construction and permanently afterwards.

- Semester is already struggling with high volumes of traffic congestion particularly during rush-hour
- Noise pollution being situated close to the motorway network
- Cumulative pollution and noise
- Increased traffic from delivery and servicing vehicles
- restricted access for emergency vehicles
- Mount Pleasant was never meant to be a through road, it was only designed and suitable to serve the small residential development that Mount Pleasant is
- Bin lorries have to reverse up the road, often un-assisted

Environmental impacts

- The proposal lacks sufficient detail on how environmental impacts will be mitigated, including increased air pollution, surface water run-off, and biodiversity loss.
- Given the limited infrastructure in the area, assurances are needed around drainage, sustainable design measures, and landscape , charging provision for vehicles that could and should benefit the wider village whilst cabling is being laid, buffers to protect local character and amenity.
- Destroy wildlife habitat
- The Biodiversity Assessment is inaccurate, as there are agreed legal documents regarding the land boundaries, that would not allow the hedgerow they are claiming
- Biodiversity around the lake is significant and this development will threaten the wildlife by significantly disturbing their environment.

Cumulative Impact with Other Plans including affordable housing.

- The surrounding area, including Simister, is subject to wider infrastructure and development proposals. It is unclear whether this application has been considered in the context of those plans, or whether those plans have factored in the cumulative impact of this scheme. This risks piecemeal development without a coordinated approach to traffic management, service provision, and environmental protection.

Character and design

- The houses on the planning application are not in-keeping with the current style of houses in mount pleasant and the wider area and will stand out.
- Represents a notable intensification of housing in a location where infrastructure is already under strain. Without adequate mitigation and a holistic plan for the area, this could erode the village character and create long-term accessibility and quality-of-life issues for residents.
- Overlooking of other properties on Mount Pleasant and invasion of privacy

Other issues

- The planning application shows that the land purchased included some of the lake up to the boundary of surrounding properties i believe this is inaccurate as some residents purchased land off one of the previous owners which brings there boundaries in to the lake.

Statutory/Non-Statutory Consultations

Traffic Section - Recommend refusal

Borough Engineer - Drainage Section - No objection subject to condition

Environmental Health - Contaminated Land - No objection subject to conditions

Waste Management - No response received

Minerals and Waste Planning Unit (Urban Vision Partnership Ltd) - No response received

United Utilities (Water and waste) - No objection subject to condition

The Coal Authority - No objection and recommend inclusion of their standing advice.

Planning & Building Regs Consultation Fire Protection Dept - The proposals may not meet the requirements for Fire Service access and water provision.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit - No objection subject to minor amendments

recommended for the BNG assessment and metric.

Pre-start Conditions - Not relevant

Development Plan and Policies

NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
H1/2	Further Housing Development
H2/2	The Layout of New Residential Development
H2/1	The Form of New Residential Development
EN1/2	Townscape and Built Design
HT2/4	Car Parking and New Development
OL1/2	New Buildings in the Green Belt
MW1/1	Areas of Search
GMMWP	Greater Manchester Minerals and Waste Plan
JP-C2	Digital Connectivity
JP-C5	Streets For All
JP-C6	Walking and Cycling
JP-C8	Transport Requirements of New Development
JP-G1	Landscape Character
JP-G8	A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity
JP-G9	The Green Belt
JP-H1	Scale of New Housing Development
JP-H3	Type, Size and Design of New Housing
JP-H4	Density of New Housing
JP-P1	Sustainable Places
JP-S1	Sustainable Development
JP-S2	Carbon and Energy
JP-S4	Flood Risk and the Water Environment
JP-S5	Clean Air
JP-C1	Our Integrated Network
SPD11	Parking Standards in Bury
SPD6	Supplementary Planning Document 6: Alterations & Extensions

Issues and Analysis

The following report includes analysis of the merits of the application against the relevant policies of both the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (PfE) and the saved policies within the adopted Bury Unitary Development Plan (UDP), together with other relevant material planning considerations.

The policies of the UDP that have been used to assess this application are considered to be in accordance with the NPPF and as such are material planning considerations. For simplicity, just the UDP and PfE Policies will be referred to in the report, unless there is a particular matter to highlight arising from the NPPF where it would otherwise be specifically mentioned.

Equality Act 2010: All planning applications are considered in light of the Equality Act 2010 and associated Public Sector Equality Duty, where the Council is required to have due regard for:

The elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation;

The advancement of equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and person who do not share it;

The fostering of good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and person who do not share it; which applies to people from the protected equality groups.

Human Rights: All planning applications are considered against the provisions of the

Human Rights Act 1998.

Under Article 6 the applicants (and those third parties who have made representations) have the right to a fair hearing and to this end full consideration will be given to their comments.

Article 8 and Protocol 1 of the First Article confer a right to respect private and family life and a right to the protection of property, ie peaceful enjoyment of one's possessions which could include a person's home, and other land and business assets.

In taking account of the Council policy as set out in the Bury Unitary Development Plan 1997 and all material planning considerations, it is concluded on balance that the rights conferred upon the applicant/ objectors/ residents/ other interested party by Article 8 and Article 1 of the First Protocol may be interfered with, since such interference is in accordance with the law and is justified in the public interest. Any restriction of these rights posed by refusal/ approval of the application is legitimate since it is proportionate to the wider benefits of such a decision, is based upon the merits of the proposal, and falls within the margin of discretion afforded to the Council under the Town & Country Planning Acts.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes (without prejudice to any other obligation imposed on it) a duty upon the Council to exercise its functions and have due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of its functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. In so doing and on making planning decisions under the Town and Country Planning Acts, the material Planning considerations shall have due regard to the provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and its implications in the exercise of its functions.

Green Belt

The application site falls within the Green Belt as designated by PfE Policy JP-G9 and as a result any development on the site is subject to NPPF Paragraph 154 and 155.

Paragraph 153 states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness.

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF is clear that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. The submitted Planning Statement suggests that the proposed development meets the exception 154 e) limited infilling.

Whilst Unitary Development Plan policy OL1/3 names Simister as a village in the Green Belt, the site itself is not considered to comprise an infill site. It is not surrounded by development, it not a gap in an unbroken or otherwise built-up frontage, and it is not within the confines of existing development. The development of the site would comprise an unnatural extension of built area.

As such, we are not in agreement with the Planning Statement and consider that the proposed development does not meet any exceptions listed within paragraph 154.

Paragraph 155 states that the development of homes should also not be regarded as inappropriate where:

- a) The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;
- b) There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed;
- c) The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of the NPPF; and
- d) Where applicable the development proposed meets the 'Golden Rules'

requirements set out in paragraphs 156-157 below.

Grey belt is defined by the NPPF as "land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143. 'Grey belt' excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development."

The application site does not impact assets referred to in footnote 7. As such, the first test is to determine whether the land does or does not contribute strongly to the following purposes:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;

Planning guidance published on 27th February 2025 for assessing a site against these purposes is relevant to determine whether the land constitutes grey belt for decision making. In particular, paragraph 005 of the guidance sets out the key considerations to inform judgements as to whether land is grey belt (Reference ID: 64-005-20250225). As such, the site's contribution to these purposes is considered below.

Purpose A - to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

The site is located on the edge of Mount Pleasant in Simister, located approximately 250m from the boundary of allocation JPA1.2 Simister/Bowlee. Whilst it is assessed as part of parcel BU_BA02 in the Greater Manchester Green Belt Assessment (2018), this assessment is now out-of-date as the Green Belt boundary in this location has since been amended through the adoption of the Places for Everyone plan.

This part of the Green Belt now represents a small but crucial gap which contributes strongly to checking the un-restricted sprawl of the emerging built development at JPA1.2 with Prestwich. Excluding the substantial barrier created by the M62, the gap is approximately 800m wide. The site, which does not contain existing development and is not enclosed by existing development, would result in an incongruous pattern of development. There are no physical features in reasonable proximity that could restrict and contain development.

Therefore, the site is considered to play a strong role in inhibiting sprawl and would represent an incongruous pattern of development.

Purpose B - to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

The site is also considered to play an essential role in maintaining the gap between Middleton and Prestwich. The development of the site would erode the visual separation between the towns and would contribute to the merging of Prestwich with the emerging built development at JPA1.2.

Green Belt Conclusion

Therefore, it is clear that this site contributes strongly to both purpose a) and b) of paragraph 143 and cannot be considered to be 'grey belt'.

Regardless of the above, the site is also within a wholly unsustainable location more than 2 miles from the nearest town and poorly served by public transport. The proposal would undoubtedly result in car dependent development, in conflict with PfE Policy JP-C1 and fail to meet NPPF paragraph 155(c).

As such, the proposal is considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Landscape Character Area

Policy JP-G1: Landscape Character designates the site as within LCA27: Simister,

Slattocks and Healds Green, which falls within the Urban Fringe Farmland character type. Development in this area is required to reflect and respond to the special qualities and sensitivities of the key landscape characteristics of its location, including having regard to:

- Topography, geology and drainage;
- Land use and field patterns;
- Semi-natural habitats and woodland cover;
- Archaeology and cultural heritage;
- Settlement, road pattern and rights of way; and
- Views and perceptual qualities.

The interface of any new development on this site with the surrounding countryside/landscape is of particular importance. These transitional areas will require well-considered and sensitive treatment. In particular, opportunities to improve the intactness and condition of the landscape should be taken, especially in conjunction with seeking a net enhancement of biodiversity/geodiversity resources under Policy JP-G8 'A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity'.

Three-storey terraced houses would be wholly incompatible with the surrounding landscape, settlement patterns and would have a detrimental impact on views and perceptual qualities in the village and would be unsuited for a site which would have a clear interface with the surrounding countryside and Landscape Character Area.

The proposals therefore conflict with JP-G1 which requires considered and sensitive treatment.

Density

PfE Policy JP-H4 - Requires new housing development to be delivered at a density appropriate to the location, reflecting the relative accessibility of the site by walking, cycling and public transport and the need to achieve efficient use of land and high-quality design. Policy JP-H4 sets out minimum densities that should be considered. The site falls in an area where a minimum density of 35 dwellings per hectare applies. The total site area is circa 0.435 hectares, therefore 7 dwellings equates to 16 dwellings per hectare. Development at 35 dwellings per hectare would equate to 16 dwellings

The developable area of the site, excluding the wildflower meadow equates to circa 0.24 hectares. A development of 7 dwellings on this site area equates to 29 dwellings per hectare. 35 dwellings per hectare would equate to 8 dwellings, therefore the development is slightly below the PfE density.

PfE Policy JP-H4 states that lower densities may be acceptable where they can be clearly justified by:

1. Local housing market issues, such as a demonstrable need for a particular type of housing that cannot be delivered at higher density; or
2. Site-specific issues, such as the design context and any potential impact on the wider landscape or townscape including heritage assets and green infrastructure.

The retention of green infrastructure on the site has been accounted for in calculating the development density. The site's Green Belt location would not automatically justify a lower density, and it is considered that the site could achieve 8 dwellings (were the development not considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt).

Layout and design

The proposed development would be sited on land to the south of Mount Pleasant with the built development and new access road primarily located in the middle and western part of the site, utilising approximately half the site.

The new access road would continue from the end of the cul de sac which serves Mount

Pleasant and lead to a turning head and continue westwards to form a 'U' shape around the semi detached dwellings and serving the row of terraced properties at the far western corner of the site.

This arrangement would have an odd appearance, in that the turning head appears to serve little purpose and the location and orientation of the semi-detached houses would be unrelated to the terraces, resulting in what appears as 2 separate and disparate developments.

The proposed road formation would also result in excessive hardstanding due to the poor arrangement of the dwellings and is considered to be poor design.

There would be acceptable levels of private amenity space and the development would provide 2 parking spaces per dwelling which would be in compliance with SPD1. However, it does not appear to provide secure covered cycle storage for one cycle space per bedroom, but this could be sought prior to determination or conditioned.

In terms of the internal layout, the dwellings would provide acceptable levels of accommodation, PFE Policy JP-H3 seeks to provide an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes. All new dwellings must

1. comply with the nationally described space standards (NDSS) and
2. be built to the 'accessible and adaptable standard in Part M4(2) of Building Regulations unless specific site conditions make this impracticable.

The proposed plans show that all the bedrooms would meet NDSS, and comply with minimum standards for overall floor area although it is noted that some of the bedrooms would only just meet JP-H3 criteria.

The accessible and adaptable standard in Part M4(2) of Building Regulations would need to be secured by condition.

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that policies and decision should ensure that developments add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, and layout are sympathetic to local character and establish or maintain a strong sense of space.

At para 139 the NPPF states that development that is not designed well should be refused.

In terms of the design of the semi-detached houses, there are no particular design features of architectural interest. The dwellings would have grey anthracite pitched roofs and elevations part red brick part render. Windows would be symmetrically positioned within the fenestration. The terraced houses would be 3 storey with gable ends and square box type dormers on the front and rooflights on the rear. Again, fenestrations would be relatively plain but would be built of two contrasting coloured red bricks.

Whilst a mix of design and materials is commonly found within new housing development, the designs proposed for the terraced and semi detached appear completely unrelated in their roof form and elevations and there would be no legibility or coherency within the site.

As there would only be 7 no dwellings, it is important that there is some cohesion and connectivity in design, but this proposal appears to provide none. The design of the proposal would also be disconnected to the character of development found in Simister Village.

It is therefore considered that the design and layout of the proposed development would result in a poorly designed and illegible development which would have no coherence or readability either as a development in its own right or in connection to the wider area.

The proposed development would therefore be contrary to policies EN1/2, H2/1, JP-G1 and the principles of the NPPF.

Active Travel

Policy JP-C1 - An Integrated Network requires developments to be located and designed to deliver a significant increase in the proportion of trips that can be made by walking, cycling and public transport. Developments should prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. No provision has been made for the integration of good quality, safe pedestrian and cycle routes to and from the site. The proposals therefore conflict with Policy JP-C1.

Highways

Access

It is proposed to access the site by extending the cul de sac which serves Mount Pleasant.

The cul de sac is a fairly narrow road which already serves 33 dwellings and it is not easy to manoeuvre and turn unless the driver has access to a driveway.

The additional traffic created as a result of the development would intensify the use of Mount Pleasant and surrounding roads, which are inadequate in terms of width and alignment and to an unacceptable degree.

In addition the proposal would create in sub-standard pedestrian vehicular access arrangements onto Mount Pleasant and sub-standard arrangements at the interface with the adopted highway on Mount Pleasant.

The Highway Section have objected to the proposed development and recommend refusal.

JP-C8 - Transport Requirement of New Developments states that development will need to have regard to Policy JP-C8. The proposed development is not located in an area that is well served by public transport nor is it located close to any existing services or facilities. This would undoubtedly result in a car dependent development from the outset, in conflict with PfE Policy JP-C8.

As such, the proposed development would be contrary to policies H2/2, JP-C5, JP-C6 and JP-C8.

Parking

The development would provide 2 parking space per dwelling which would comply with SPD11.

It is also a requirement to provide 1 secured, covered cycle space per bedroom. The proposed plans do not show cycle storage facilities. However it is considered this could be conditioned if necessary.

Fire safety

- The above proposal may not meet the requirements for Fire Service access and water provision.
- Access for fire and rescue service (B5)
- Access and facilities for the fire service should be in accordance with Section 13 Vehicle Access of Approved Document B volume 1: 2019, supporting the Building Regulations 2010.
- For dwelling houses access for a pumping appliance should be provided to within 45m of all points inside the dwelling house. For Flats, access for a pumping appliance to within 45m of all points inside each flat of a block, measured along the route of the hose. Provide fire mains in accordance with paragraphs 13.5 and 13.6.
- Access routes and hardstanding's should comply with the guidance in Table 13.1.
- Dead-end access routes longer than 20m require turning facilities, as in Diagram 13.1. Turning facilities should comply with the guidance in Table 13.1.

The applicant would need to provide confirmation that the proposed development would

satisfy the above requirements.

NOTE: The measurements within the tables are based on nominal 12.5 Tonne assumption for a fire appliance.

The current fleet within Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue service have gross weights of 18 Tonne for an appliance and 26 Tonne for a high reach vehicle. Consideration should be given to this in any application made.

Provision of water supplies (B5)

- Fire Mains and Hydrants for the fire service should be in accordance with Section 14 Vehicle Access of Approved Document B volume 1: 2019, supporting the Building Regulations 2010.
- Consideration should be given to the guidance detailed in the Local Government Association document 'National Guidance document on the provision of water for firefighting'.
- In order that the fire hydrant requirements can be assessed, the applicant is advised to submit details of the water main installations to the fire service
- Water supplies for firefighting purposes should be risk assessed in accordance with the forementioned guidance in liaison with the water undertakers (United Utilities - 0161 907 7351) with suitable and sufficient fire hydrants supplied.

Recommendation for automatic water suppression system

Whilst the implementation of this report would promote life safety for the occupants, members of the public and operational Firefighters, the Fire Authority recommends the fitting of sprinklers, which will also reduce damage by fire to both the building and the environment.

Should the proposal require Statutory Building Regulations approval at a later stage, and the comments relating to B5 functional requirements not be met, this may result in a noncompliance formal response.

Ecology

Summary

There do not appear to be any significant ecological issues associated with this development. There are minor amendments recommended for the BNG assessment and metric.

Great Crested Newts (gcn)

There is a pond adjacent to the site and a number of other ponds within 250m, potential great crested newt habitat. The consultant has however assessed the risk of an offence as very unlikely, with the pond adjacent to the site containing carp. GMEU would tend to agree, as all ponds have been surveyed historically, some more recently and no gcn found and whilst a small population has been recorded in the general locality, around 800m to the SE, recent survey have failed to find this population. GMEU therefore agree that reasonable avoidance measures would suffice and would recommend a condition that the development be carried out in accordance with the reasonable avoidance measure contained in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Pennine ecological August 2025, section 5.3.4 extended to include all amphibian and small mammal as already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the LPA prior to determination.

Other Protected Species

No evidence of any other protected species was recorded though bats will likely forage over the site. GMEU have no reason to doubt the findings of the report. No further information or specific measures are required.

Nesting Birds

Scrub is present on the site, potential bird nesting habitat, whilst some will be retained and enhanced, some will be lost. All British birds nests and eggs (with certain limited exceptions) are protected by Section 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended.

GMEU recommend a condition to restrict the removal of trees and shrubs.

Other Wildlife

The scrub and tall ruderal vegetation will provide cover for small mammals and amphibians, such as common toad and hedgehog. GMEU are satisfied however that the reasonable avoidance measure noted above are adequate to protect other wildlife. No further information or measures are required.

Himalayan Balsam

This invasive species listed under schedule 9 part 2 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) was recorded on the site. It is an offence to introduce or cause to grow wild any plant listed under this schedule. The developer is unlikely to be able to avoid this species, there will therefore be a risk of an offence if seed is transported off-site in spoil or on contract vehicles. GMEU therefore recommend a condition that prior to any earthworks a method statement detailing control measures for Himalayan balsam should be supplied to and agreed in writing to the LPA. The agreed method statement shall be adhered to and implemented in full unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA.

Contributing to and Enhancing the Natural Environment & Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Section 187 of the NPPF 2024 states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. 10% BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).

The development would result in a reduction in the area of vegetated habitats through loss of tall herb, grassland and scrub. A significant area is however retained, with habitat enhancement and creation proposed. Wildlife issues appear restricted to loss of bird nesting opportunities.

10% BNG applies that indicates 10% net gain is achievable on-site. GMEU would tend to agree as whilst there are some issues with the definition of some of the habitats in the on-site baseline and strategic significance, if changed, 10% is still achieved.

Issues include:

- Some habitats are defined as being of high significance and others as medium. In the opinion of GMEU, all baseline and post development habitats are of low significance. The site is well outside the boundaries of the Local Nature Recovery Network that has now been published;
- The tall forbs are on areas of previously disturbed ground and prior to that grassland. GMEU accept that tall herb do not fall neatly in to biodiversity net gain, and can fall under the category given by the applicant, but also other neutral grassland and urban vacant and derelict land, depending on the origin of the tall herb. For this site GMEU would regard urban derelict land or other neutral grassland as more applicable given this is natural succession on what was an area of farmland that was briefly disturbed in the early 2020's. GMEU would however regard it as being in poor condition not moderate as not a typical example of its type.
- GMEU would also not regard all the land assigned urban artificial unvegetated land as being the case, some is clearly vegetated beyond the threshold of what would move it in to either vacant and derelict land or short ephemeral.

However, as noted even taking all the opinions as correct, which as the site has not been visited, is not necessarily the case, 10% is still achieved. Therefore, it would be reasonable to allow any changes to be provided as part of the discharge of the statutory biodiversity gain condition.

If permission is granted a 30 year habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP) would be required as some of the habitat creation and enhancement proposals would be regarded

as significant by defra. As these amount to more than two units GMMEU would recommend this is controlled via a section 106 as opposed to a standard condition, but this is ultimately for the LPA to decide.

To discharge the statutory condition, the applicant would need to submit -

- The biodiversity gain plan using the defra template,
- The 30 year HMMP and
- The finalised version of the statutory metric ie with the amendments recommended above included (or not if a justifiable explanation is provided).

GMEU would recommend provision of bird and bat boxes as mitigation/enhancement for wildlife, in line with policies in the developing local plan. The details can be provided via condition.

Coal Authority

The Coal Authority have reviewed the site location plan provided and can confirm that the site falls within the Coal Authority's defined Development Low Risk Area. On this basis they have no specific comments to make.

However, in the interest of public safety, it is requested that the Coal Authority's Standing Advice note is drawn to the applicant's attention, where relevant.

Carbon and Energy

JP-S2 - Carbon & Energy sets out the steps required to achieve net zero carbon emissions. The proposed development would be designed to limit energy demand through the inclusion of a thermally efficient building fabric and energy efficient services. Low carbon technology would be incorporated and comprise solar PV at 4.8 kWp / dwelling, split on both sides of the pitch roof. This would result in a 83% saving in CO2 emissions over Part L 2021 regulations. The proposal is in conformity with Policy JP-S2.

Digital Connectivity

JP-C2 - Digital Connectivity - this policy requires development to have full fibre to premises connections unless infeasible or unviable, with multiple-ducting. The policy supports the provision of free, secure, high-speed public wi-fi connections, particularly in the most frequented areas. The applicant has confirmed that the development would be provided with full connections in accordance with the requirements of Policy JP-C2.

Recommendation: Refuse

Conditions and Reasons:

- 1 The proposed development is considered not to comprise an infill site as it is not surrounded by development, not a gap in an unbroken or otherwise built-up frontage, and not within the confines of existing development. As such, the proposed development would be contrary to the principles of para 154 of the NPPF.
- 2 The proposed development site contributes strongly to Green Belt purpose (a) (unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas) and purpose b (prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another). Therefore, the proposed development would fail the tests set out in Paragraph 155 a) of the NPPF in relation to Grey Belt Land.
- 3 The proposed development for 7 No dwellings on the developable area of the site of circa 0.24 hectares would not make optimal use of the potential of the site. Therefore, the proposed development would conflict with Policy JP-H4 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and Chapter 11, particularly paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

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- 4 The proposed development would be located in a wholly unsustainable location . The proposed development would therefore fail the tests set out in Paragraph 155 (c) of the NPPF in relation to Grey Belt Land and be contrary to PfE Policy JP-C1 - An Integrated Network.
- 5 The proposed development, by virtue of the poor layout of the site and design of the proposed dwellings would result in an incoherent and illegible development which would also appear disconnected and unrelated to the character of Simister village and the Landscape Character Area. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to policies H2/1, JP-G1 and the principles of the NPPF.
- 6 The proposed development would result in an intensification of the use of the surrounding roads which are inadequate in terms of width and alignment. The proposed development would therefore conflict with policies H2/2, JP-C5 and JP-C8.
- 7 The proposal would result in the creation of sub-standard pedestrian and vehicular access arrangements onto Mount Pleasant, which would be detrimental to the free flow of traffic and road and pedestrian safety. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to policies H2/2, JP-C5 and JP-C8.
- 8 The proposal would result in the creation of sub-standard arrangements at the interface with the adopted highway on Mount Pleasant, would not maintain the integrity of the adopted highway, which would be detrimental to the free flow of traffic and road safety. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to Policies H2/2, JP-C5 and JP-C8.
- 9 The proposed servicing provision is inadequate and is likely to lead to vehicles parking and carrying out manoeuvres on the highway to the detriment of the free flow of traffic and road safety. The development would therefore be contrary to Policies H2/2 and JP-C8.
- 10 The proposal does not provide suitable accommodation for vehicles to enter and leave the site in a forward gear, and therefore is detrimental to road safety and maintaining the free flow of traffic. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to Policies H2/2, JP-C5 and JP-C8. ,
- 11 The proposal does not meet the requirements of Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service for access and water provision, which would pose an unacceptable risk in terms of fire safety and be detrimental to the safety of the future occupiers of the dwellings proposed. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to Policy JP-C8.

<u>Case Officer</u> JT 31/10/25	<u>Date</u>	<u>Sign off Officer</u> DM 31/10/25	<u>Date</u>
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