

Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Development Control

Our ref: SO/2025/125223/02-L01
Your ref: 25/00314/FUL

Date: 29 September 2025

Sent via email

Dear Planning Team

Change of use of first and second floors from vacant commercial floorspace to 10no. Residential apartments (use class c3) and external alterations including new window openings and associated ground floor cycle storage and external bin storage

1 Drake Street, Rochdale OL16 1RE

Thank you for consulting us on the above.

Environment Agency Position

We have no objection to the proposal, however please note the following.

Flood Risk

We have no objection on flood risk grounds, given that the proposal only applies to parts of the existing building that are first floor and above, which means they are situated above the design flood level. However, please include the following informatives in any permission granted.

Informative - advice to LPA

We do not normally comment on or approve the adequacy of flood emergency response procedures accompanying development proposals, as we do not carry out these roles during a flood. Our involvement with this development during an emergency will be limited to delivering flood warnings to occupants/users covered by our flood warning network.

Planning practice guidance (PPG) states that, in determining whether a development is safe, the ability of residents and users to safely access and exit a building during a design flood and to evacuate before an extreme flood needs to be considered. One of the key considerations to ensure that any new development is safe is whether adequate flood warnings would be available to people using the development.

In all circumstances where warning and emergency response is fundamental to managing flood risk, we advise local planning authorities to formally consider the emergency planning and rescue implications of new development in making their decisions. As such, we recommend you refer to [‘Flood risk emergency plans for new development’](#) and undertake appropriate consultation with your emergency planners and the emergency services to determine whether the proposals are safe in accordance with paragraph 181 of the NPPF and the guiding principles of the PPG.

We have considered the findings of the flood risk assessment (FRA) and acknowledge the safe refuge and pre-flood evacuation arrangements set out within the FRA. However, we note that it does not take in to consideration any flood duration, velocities or indicate the hazard rating against the design flood for the proposal.

This does not mean we consider the access is safe, or the proposals acceptable in this regard. We remind you to consult with your emergency planners and the emergency services to confirm the adequacy of the evacuation proposals.

Informative - advice to applicant

Please be aware that a FRAP may be required for any temporary construction works and/or storage of materials.

The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 require a permit or exemption to be obtained for any activity which will take place:

- on or within 8 metres of a main river (16 metres if tidal)
- on or within 8 metres of a flood defence structure or culvert (16 metres if tidal)
- on or within 16 metres of a sea defence
- involving quarrying or excavation within 16 metres of any main river, flood defence (including a remote defence) or culvert
- in a floodplain more than 8 metres from the river bank, culvert or flood defence structure (16 metres if it's a tidal main river) and you don't already have planning permission.

For further guidance please visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities> environmental-permits or contact our National Customer Contact Centre on 03708 506 506 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm) or by emailing enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk.

The applicant should not assume that a permit will automatically be forthcoming once planning permission has been granted, and we advise them to consult with us at the earliest opportunity.

Decision notice

In accordance with the planning practice guidance ([determining a planning application, paragraph 019](#)), please notify us by email within two weeks of a decision being made or application withdrawn. Please provide us with a URL of the decision notice, or an electronic copy of the decision notice or outcome.

Please note that our comments are based on the details available to us at the time of writing. If any subsequent changes are made to the application, please reconsult us.

Should you have any queries regarding this response, please contact me.

Yours faithfully

Miss Jennifer Wilson
Planning Specialist

Direct e-mail SPPlanning.RFH@environment-agency.gov.uk

customer service line 03708 506 506
[gov.uk/environment-agency](https://www.gov.uk/environment-agency)