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PLANNING STATEMENT

PLANNING STATEMENT FOR CHANGE OF USE FROM B8 (GENERAL WAREHOUSE AND STORAGE WITH OFFICES) TO CLASS E(A) (DISPLAY OR RETAIL SALE OF GOODS, OTHER THAN HOT FOOD) FOR MEGARETAILER LIMITED AT PRINCESS HOUSE, PRINCESS STREET, ROCHDALE.

1. Introduction

This planning statement is submitted in support of an application for the change of use of the existing B8 general warehouse and storage facility with offices at Princess House, Princess Street, Rochdale, to Class E(a) retail use. The proposed development is intended to support Megaretailer Limited in establishing a bulk retail outlet offering discounted clearance lines, which will provide affordable products to the local community.

2. Proposed Development

The proposal seeks to convert the main warehouse section of the building into a retail unit, allowing members of the public to purchase goods in bulk or through multi-buy deals at cost-effective prices. The business will stock a range of essential household goods, including:

- Toiletries
- Soft drinks and confectionery
- Snacks
- Alcohol (subject to an alcohol licence currently under consideration)

The store will operate seven days a week, with the following opening hours:

- Monday to Saturday: 8:00 AM – 8:00 PM
- Sunday: 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM (regulated trading hours)

A small portion of the warehouse will remain inaccessible to the public and will be designated for goods-in and stock holding. All stock replenishment activities, including forklift operations and vehicle deliveries, will take place outside of public opening hours to ensure customer safety and minimize any disruption.

3. Compliance with Rochdale MBC Planning Policies

The proposal aligns with relevant Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council planning policies, particularly those outlined in the Core Strategy and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), including:

- **Policy E1 – Establishing Thriving Town, District, and Local Centres:** The proposed retail use will contribute positively to Rochdale's economic growth by repurposing an underutilized warehouse into an active retail space that serves the community's needs.
- **Policy EC2 – Creating Vibrant Employment Areas:** The change of use will retain employment opportunities while introducing a business model that enhances affordability for local residents.
- **Policy P3 – Improving Design and Image:** The refurbishment and repurposing of the warehouse for retail use will improve the site's functionality and its integration within the local urban environment.
- **Policy T2 – Improving Accessibility:** The site is well-located within an accessible urban area, benefitting from existing public transport links and pedestrian infrastructure.

4. Community Benefits and Social Impact

Megaretailer Limited is committed to supporting the local community by working with Rochdale Council to explore potential pricing concessions for vulnerable groups, including:

- Families in need of financial support
- Low-income individuals
- Students
- Local food banks

By offering bulk purchase options and multi-buy deals, the business aims to provide cost-effective shopping solutions, addressing affordability concerns within the community.

5. Transport and Accessibility

The site is well-connected via public transport, with bus services operating along Princess Street and linking to Rochdale town centre. The change of use is unlikely to generate significant additional traffic impacts beyond existing warehouse operations. Adequate parking and loading facilities exist to support customer visits and logistical operations.

6. Conclusion

This planning statement demonstrates that the proposed change of use from B8 to Class E(a) is appropriate for Princess House, Princess Street, Rochdale. The proposal aligns with Rochdale MBC's planning policies and will deliver economic and social benefits by providing affordable retail goods to the community. The operational plan ensures safety, efficiency, and minimal disruption, making this an ideal use for the site.