



Linkside, Sunny Brow Road, Middleton, M24 4BG.

Construction of 7 no. dwellings, associated access works, infrastructure and landscaping following demolition of the existing dwelling and buildings on site.



Supporting Planning, Design and Access Statement.

On behalf of Matchbook Ltd.

April 2023.

**SEYMOUR
PLANNING**

T: 07807 136 972 | E: jim.seymour@seymourplanning.com

Seymour Planning Limited is a limited company registered in England and Wales. Registration number: 10657391. Registered office: 27 Central Drive, Romiley, Stockport, Cheshire. SK6 4PE.

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APPENDIX 1: Derek Richardson (Greater Manchester Ecology Unit) consultation response to previous application.

1. Introduction.

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Seymour Planning (SP) Ltd on behalf of Matchbook Ltd in support of their planning application for the proposed redevelopment of this site at Linkside, Sunny Brow Road, Middleton.

1.2 **The application is a resubmission of previous planning application ref: 22/01321/FUL which was refused planning permission on 22/2/23. The application has been amended to address the refusal reason of this previous application.**

1.3 The proposed redevelopment comprises the construction of 7 no. dwellings, associated access works, infrastructure and landscaping following demolition of the existing dwelling and buildings on site.

1.4 The purpose of this Planning Statement is to examine the main planning issues relating to the development proposed.

1.5 This Planning Statement is informed by and should be read in conjunction with the following plans and supporting documents:

- Location, site, existing and proposed plans produced by (A.J. Cocker Architects).
- Transport Statement produced (by SCL).
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Bat surveys (by Collington Winter).
- Arboricultural Reports (by James Royston Arboricultural Consultant).
- Drainage Report (by T.J. Booth Associates)
- **Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report (by Collington Winter)**

1.6 This Planning Statement demonstrates why the proposal accords with national and local planning policy. It addresses the previous reason for refusal under application 22/01321/FUL. It explains why the proposal constitutes sustainable development. It justifies why planning permission should be granted.

2. Site location and analysis.

Context and Location.

2.1 The application site is currently in use as a single large residential dwellinghouse with several associated outbuildings. It sits within a predominately residential area in Middleton.

2.2 Middleton centre lies a short distance to the south-east which provides a thriving variety of shops and service uses as well as good public transport connections to bus and train.

The Application Site.

2.3 The planning application relates to a spacious plot of land set back from Sunny Brow Road. The plot is adjoined to Sunny Brow Road via a private drive. The site currently contains a large split level dwellinghouse (known as Linkside) which is located towards the centre of the site. The property contains three large, detached outbuildings located within its wider curtilage to the south-east, north-east, and north-west corners of the garden. Four trees within the site are protected by Tree Preservation Order. The remainder of the trees at the site are not protected.

2.4 The site is adjoined to all sides by residential properties. To the east lie a row of properties located off Lime Gardens. To the south lie a pair of detached dwellings that front directly onto Sunny Brow Road. To the west lies a more recent residential development containing 8 no. dwellings arranged around Johnson Grove. To the north lies North Manchester Golf Course.



Figure 1: Site location

Other Information.

2.5 The site does not contain or lie adjacent to any Locally Listed Buildings.

2.6 The site does not contain or lie adjacent to any Statutorily Listed Buildings.

2.7 The site is not in a Conservation Area.

2.8 The site is affected by Tree Preservation Order (ref: No. 266). 4 no. trees at the site are protected. The remainder of the trees are unprotected.

2.9 There are no public rights of way that cross site.

2.10 The site is designated as lying within land covered by Flood Zone 1 status according to the Environment Agency (EA) Flood Map.

3. Planning History.

3.1 The application site has considerable previous planning history.

22/1321/FUL – Erection of 7 no. dwellings, associated access works, infrastructure, and landscaping, following demolition of the existing dwelling and buildings. Refused 22/2/23.

12/D55180 – Application for New Planning Permission to replace extant planning permission D50870 for the erection of 11 new, four bedroom dwellings (including demolition of existing dwelling). Granted subject to conditions 30/3/12.

08/D50870 – Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 11 dwellings Refused by the Middleton Township Planning Sub Committee 30/7/08. Subsequently allowed at planning appeal by the Planning Inspectorate ref: APP/P4225/A/08/2084901.

07/D48697 – Residential development – 13 Flats – Resubmission D47302. Refused 07/8/07.

06/D47302 – Residential development - 15 Flats – Refused 03/08/06.

4. The Proposal.

General.

- 4.1 This full planning application is submitted on behalf of Matchbook Ltd. The application seeks planning permission for the redevelopment of the site at Linkside. The proposed redevelopment comprises the construction of 7 no. dwellings including associated access improvements, infrastructure and landscaping following demolition of the existing dwelling and buildings on site.
- 4.2 The application is a resubmission of previous planning application ref: 22/01321/FUL which was refused planning permission on 22/2/23. The application has been amended to address the refusal reason of this previous application.
- 4.3 **The application is now supported by a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment Report and associated Defra Small Sites Metric. This demonstrates that the proposed development will deliver a Biodiversity Net Gain of more than 10% at the site.**

Layout and Design.

- 4.4 The proposed dwellings would be sited in two distinct locations at the site. Firstly, a staggered row of 5 no. detached houses span the width of the site running parallel with the sites north-western boundary. Secondly, a further pair of semi-detached dwellings would be located towards the sites south-eastern boundary.
- 4.5 Each property would be provided with car parking provision and landscaping to the front and a large private garden to the rear.
- 4.6 A mix of 3 no. dwelling types (House Types A, B and C) would be provided. All properties are two storeys however House Type A and House Type C have a third floor of accommodation within the roof space. All properties contain four bedrooms.

4.7 In terms of design and external appearance the properties are of traditional appearance and utilise a palette of high-quality materials appropriate to the locality. The properties comprise pitched roofs and architectural detailing including bay windows and gable features to the frontage.

Access.

4.8 The development would be served by the existing vehicular access driveway from Sunny Brow. The driveway would be upgraded to provide improved access/egress to the site in the interests of highway safety. The new access improvements are fully set out within the supporting Transport Statement prepared by SCL. This resultant design incorporates turning space within the site for a service (supermarket delivery) vehicle, refuse collection point close to the site entrance combined with visibility spays onto Sunny Brow alongside 1 x 1m pedestrian visibility splays.

4.9 Each property would be provided with an Electric Vehicle Charge Point (EVCP).

Landscape, trees and biodiversity.

4.10 The site contains several individual trees, groups of trees and hedgerow. Within the above are 4 no. trees protected by TPO. The remainder of the trees are garden trees with low overall arboricultural value. Many of the trees, including two of the TPO trees, display poor health and/or condition.

4.11 The proposal would retain several of the trees on site within the development including one of the better quality trees protected by TPO. Please refer to the accompanying Tree Report and Arboricultural Implications Assessment and Method Statement. These documents detail the condition and amenity value of the trees on site and the necessary works to protect the trees from development (including any mitigation deemed necessary to protect their health) and their ability to be retained at the site.

4.12 20 no. new trees will be replanted on site. These would comprise 12 no. “small” (DBH less than 30cm) trees and 8 no. “medium” trees (DBH between 30 – 90 cm). In addition, 90m of native hedgerow would be planted along the eastern and northern boundaries

4.13 The proposed development would also include high quality general landscaping to enhance the existing retained vegetation and trees including 85sqm of wildflower grassland providing further habitat.

4.14 The above measures proposed have been assessed using the DEFRA Small Sites Metric for BNG. In summary the metric identifies that the proposed development would deliver a significant BNG betterment. The proposal will therefore more than adequately mitigate for the tree loss required to develop the site.

Waste and Cycle Stores.

4.15 The individual properties would be provided with adequate space to store dustbins, recycling facilities and cycles (details to be agreed).

5. Local Planning Policy.

5.1 Legal Context.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications to be determined in accordance with the statutory Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The statutory Development Plan in this instance comprises policies set out in:

- Rochdale Core Strategy (Adopted October 2016)
- Rochdale Unitary Development Plan – policies that have been “saved” by direction under paragraph 1 (3) of Schedule 8 to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 hence not replaced by the Core Strategy.
- Rochdale Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map
- Greater Manchester Joint Waste Development Plan Document (Adopted April 2012)
- Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan (Adopted April 2013)

The above statutory Development Plan is also supported by several supplementary planning guidance documents which are a material consideration for decision taking purposes for local planning authorities.

5.2 Rochdale Core Strategy Policies.

Relevant policies are:

SO1: To deliver a more prosperous economy

SO2: To create successful and healthy communities

SO3: To improve design, image and quality of place

SO4: To promote a greener environment

SO5: To improve accessibility and deliver sustainable transport

C1: Delivering the right amount of housing in the right places

C3: Delivering the right type of housing

P1: Improving image

P2: Protecting and enhancing character, landscape, and heritage

P3: Improving design of new development

G1: Tackling and adapting to climate change

G2: Energy and new development

G6: Enhancing Green Infrastructure

G7: Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity

T2: Improving accessibility

DM1: General development requirements

SD1: Delivering sustainable development

5.3 Rochdale Unitary Development Plan “saved” policies.

Relevant Policies are:

G/H/1: Housing

H/3: Residential Development Outside Allocated Areas

H/5: Residential Density

G/A/1: Accessibility

A/2: Accessibility Hierarchy

A/3: New Development – Access for Pedestrians and Disabled People

A/4: New Development – Access for Cyclists

A/8: New Development – Capacity of the Highway Network

A/9: New Development – Access for General Traffic

A/10: New Development – Provision of Parking

G/BE/1: Design Quality

BE/2: Design Criteria for New Development
BE/8 Landscaping in new Development

G/EM/1: Environmental Protection and Pollution Control

EM/2: Pollution

EM/3: Noise and New Development

EM/4: Contaminated Land

EM/7: Development and Flood Risk

EM/8: Protection of Surface and Ground Water

EM/9: Development Involving Unstable Land

G/EM/12: Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation

EM/13: Energy Efficiency and New Development

5.4 Housing Evidence Base.

Rochdales **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment - March 2021 (SHLAA)** sets out the Councils evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land for housing to meet the community's need for new homes. Its main purpose is to identify sites with potential for housing and assess when they are likely to be developed.

The application site is listed within the SHLAA under the "Other identified sites for housing" sections and is listed as follows:

- ***SH 1529 – Linkside, Sunny Brow Road, Middleton - Area (HA) 0.30, Density 37, Capacity 11 delivery 11 -15 years, Brownfield.***

5.5 Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Supplementary Planning Guidance (Saved SPG's and SPD's) does not form part of the Statutory Development Plan nevertheless it does provide non-statutory Council approved guidance that supports the adopted CS and saved SUDP Review policies and is a material consideration when determining planning applications.

The following supplementary guidance documents are relevant:

- Guidelines & Standards for Residential Development SPD (Adopted June 2016).
- Provision of recreational open space in new housing SPD (Adopted 2008).

6. National Planning Policy.

Background.

6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was republished in July 2021.

The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. Taken together, these policies articulate the Government's vision for sustainable development which should be interpreted and applied in determining planning applications.

6.2 In addition, the Government published its National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) in March 2014. The web-based resource pools together a series of planning guidance documents into a new format. It is intended to be used to assist in the interpretation and execution of the NPPF. It is also therefore a material consideration in the determination of this application.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

6.3 Relevant points which positively relate to the proposed development are outlined as follows:

- Paragraph 7 outlines the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- Paragraph 8 specifies that there are three objectives to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.
- Paragraph 11 specifies that at the heart of the planning system is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking.

For decision taking this means:

- Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and

- Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - *the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed, or*
 - *Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.*
- Paragraph 60 states LPA's should support the Governments' objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, that it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where needed and that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed.
- Paragraph 92 outlines that decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places.
- Paragraph 111 confirms that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- Paragraph 119 identifies that planning should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- Paragraph 126 specifies that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- Paragraph 130 sets out that planning policies and decisions should ensure that

developments *inter alia*:

- ✓ Function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
 - ✓ Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate effective landscaping;
 - ✓ Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change;
-
- Paragraph 154 sets out that new development should avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
 - Paragraph 166 confirms that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere.
 - Paragraph 174 sets out that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.
 - Paragraph 180 confirms that planning policies and decisions should fully consider biodiversity impacts.
 - Paragraph 219 specifies that due weight should be given to existing policies, according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF; the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given.

7. Planning analysis.

7.1 The main planning issues for consideration are:

- Impact on trees and Net Biodiversity Gain.
- Principle of Development.
- Residential Amenity.
- Design.
- Highways and parking.
- Drainage.
- Sustainable development.

Impact on Trees and Net Biodiversity Gain.

7.2 This application is a resubmission of previous planning application ref: 22/01321/FUL which was refused planning permission on 22/2/23. **The application has been amended to address the refusal reason issued for that application.**

7.3 The previous application was deemed to result in an unacceptable tree loss at the site with insufficient replacement planting to mitigate. The refusal reason specified that this would have an unacceptable impact on green infrastructure and the visual amenities of the area contrary to Policy G6 of the Rochdale Core Strategy.

7.4 The above view was taken despite the support of the Councils appointed tree and ecology consultant (Mr D Richardson of Greater Manchester Ecology Unit) to the proposed development and replacement mitigation landscaping scheme. Please see appendix 1 which confirms Mr Richardson's position.

7.5 Mr Richardson's consultation response confirmed that the trees scheduled for removal, including those covered by TPO, are of poor arboriculture value and had

limited amenity value based on their location, condition/health and type. It was noted that the majority of none TPO trees at the site were “*essentially garden trees without substantive arboricultural merit*”.

7.6 Policy G6 of the Rochdale Core Strategy seeks to enhance green infrastructure within the borough. It is principally a strategic policy which identifies a series of nine localities where green infrastructure should be protected, improved, or created. The proposal would appear to fall within the last identified locality i.e. **Urban areas and new development** where the focus is on incorporating green infrastructure into new development. The policy goes on to identify several expectations for development proposals including for replacement tree planting at a ratio of 2:1.

7.7 Policy G7 of the Rochdale Core Strategy seeks to increase the value of biodiversity within the borough. Like Policy G6 it is a strategic policy identifying several key priorities for biodiversity. This policy also identifies several expectations for development including taking opportunities in new development to promote diversity and create new habitats using *inter alia* **landscaping**.

7.8 Following refusal of the previous application advice was sought from Rochdale planning department. It has been suggested via a senior planner (Ryan Killian) that a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment should be undertaken to support a resubmission application.

7.9 The application is now supported by a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment Report including the associated Defra Small Sites Metric. This demonstrates that the proposed development will deliver a Biodiversity Net Gain of more than 10% at the site. In summary a 13.96% habitat unit increase, and 321.34% hedgerow units increase would result.

7.10 In biodiversity terms the assessment clearly demonstrates that the proposed development would result in an enhancement in accordance with the expectations of policy G7. It should however be acknowledged this would be at the expense of the not meeting the 2:1 tree planting expectation of policy G6.

There is clearly therefore a need for a sensible compromise to allow some trade-off between the two requirements of these policies in order to deliver the wider benefits of development alongside an increase in BNG.

7.11 In terms of visual amenity, it is submitted that the site and trees scheduled for removal are of limited amenity value on the following grounds. **Firstly**, it should be acknowledged that the site is of a “backland” nature. It does not have a strong presence from the Sunny Brow Road frontage with the trees being predominantly viewable only from neighbouring gardens. **Secondly**, the supporting Tree Survey classes most of the trees at the site as low visual amenity value with a small number of medium visual amenity value. **Thirdly**, the above is supported by the consultee response of Greater Manchester Ecology Unit who raised no objection previously to the removal of the trees as proposed and replacement mitigation landscaping. **Fourthly**, the submitted Tree Survey also confirms the amenity value of the existing trees to be overall low. The trees on site have been poorly kept, are overgrown, unmanaged, and cause nuisance to neighbours due to proximity to boundaries. This has led to neighbours trimming back and pruning overhanging/overshadowing branches themselves leaving the trees with poor form which impacts on their visual amenity further.

7.12 It is submitted that the previous decision was issued based on a purely quantitative assessment. A simple cross counting of trees on the existing plan compared to the proposed replacement tree planting was undertaken. This approach was basic and non-scientific. **Firstly**, it was not accurate because many of the trees form part of a wider group of multi stem trees or hedgerow rather than individual species. This is clearly identified on both the submitted Tree Survey and BNG Assessment. **Secondly**, it did not consider the quality of the trees to be removed and ignored the advice of the GMEU in this regard. The baseline used to form the previous assessment and refusal reason was therefore flawed. In summary no qualitative assessment was undertaken in terms of the quality of replacement planting proposed.

7.13 This amended submission therefore addresses this qualitative issue as advised by the Senior Planning Officer. It clearly demonstrates that there would be a Biodiversity net gain that would result from the development despite the loss of several trees at the site. Overall, more trees and hedgerow would be planted at the site than would be taken away with an overall and significant net improvement to the biodiversity and green infrastructure of the site. This meets the basic aims of both policies G6 and G7 of the Core Strategy.

7.14 The proposed mitigation tree planting, hedgerow planting and habitat creation proposed therefore more than compensates for the proposed tree loss resulting in a higher overall quality of green infrastructure at the site.

7.15 Given the improvement to Green Infrastructure identified within this resubmission it is therefore requested that the Council now support the application from this perspective.

Principle of Development.

7.16 The proposed development is consistent with current national and local planning policy and advice.

7.17 The site falls within a Defined Urban Area in the development plan and therefore is suitable in principle for residential development

7.18 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seeks to achieve sustainable development. One of the key elements in doing so is an identified need to boost housing land supply particularly in accessible locations.

7.19 Rochdale Core Strategies Policy C1 and C3 sets out the Councils desire to deliver the right types of homes that are well designed within the borough.

7.20 Policy C3 sets out a series of aspirations several of which are relevant to this proposal including:

- *Ensure new development provides housing types that take account of local needs and aspirations;*
- *Promote densities that make efficient use of land whilst delivering a range of housing to widen choice in the borough and reflect local character*

7.21 The site is identified in Rochdale's **SHLAA** (see 5.4 above) as an **"Other identified site for housing"**.

7.22 As confirmed within the SHLAA the site constitutes Previously Developed or "Brownfield" Land. The site lies within a predominantly residential area in a sustainable/accessible urban location close to Middleton Centre and therefore offers excellent access to a full range of services, facilities, and public transport.

7.23 The site has been granted planning permission previously for 11 no. dwellings (see planning history section above). Although the previous permission has expired the planning history remains a material consideration carrying significant weight in support of this proposal. This is confirmed by the subsequent and current inclusion of the site within the SHLAA.

7.24 The proposal will efficiently and effectively reuse this valuable underused land asset and help achieve the above aims and objectives set out within the Core Strategy/SHLAA. The whole site would be utilised efficiently, and this will help deliver sustainable development as required by the NPPF and Policy C1/C3 of the Core Strategy.

7.25 The proposal/site is a minor development and is not large enough to trigger a requirement for affordable housing.

Residential Amenity.

7.26 Policy DM1 of the Core Strategy sets out several basic planning considerations that apply to all development. It outlines that the content of the Council's Supplementary Planning Documents should be considered in determining

applications. Section 4 of the *Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development* SPD sets out the Council's expected space standards for new residential development.

7.27 The proposed design and layout will increase unit numbers yet retain residential amenity and privacy for both existing and intended residents. Taking into consideration the design of the proposal, existing/proposed property orientations and the position of existing habitable primary windows at the adjoining properties there are no instances of direct overlooking or overshadowing that would result.

7.28 Despite no direct overlooking or overshadowing the layout/house types have been designed to comply with the Councils adopted space standards as set out within the relevant *Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development* SPD. Overall, it is considered that an acceptable level of separation, outlook and amenity would be provided in all situations and the Councils standards are therefore complied with in this regard.

Design.

7.29 Policies SO3, P1, P2 and P3 of the Core Strategy set out a requirement for good design, improved image and protection and enhancement of character, landscape, and heritage. The proposed development will achieve the above aims.

7.30 The proposal dwellings will have no negative impact physically or visually on any adjoining land, buildings, or neighbours. The dwellings sit comfortably in position and scale in relation to the sites shape and size. The council's separation distances are provided between existing dwellings and the proposed properties in all directions. No unacceptable levels of overlooking or loss of privacy would therefore result.

7.31 The dwellings utilise a high-quality design employing a traditional approach to architecture to respect the nearest dwellings and remain in keeping with the wider surrounding area in terms of scale and appearance.

7.32 It should be noted that the proposal follows the advice of the NPPF by efficiently and effectively using this brownfield site to provide new housing whilst still providing a good level of amenity for residents including substantial private garden plots.

7.33 In general, it is considered that the proposal will provide a high-quality development for the site. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with relevant development plan policies SO3, P1, P2 and P3 which seek to provide good quality design and the advice of the NPPF. There are no design, residential layout, or amenity reasons to resist the proposal.

Highways: accessibility, servicing, and parking.

7.34 The application is supported by a Transport Statement. The report makes a full assessment of the proposal in terms of the site's accessibility and its access impact on the local highway network, servicing, and parking.

7.35 The site is in an accessible location close to local facilities/amenities and public transport. This will help discourage the use of the private motor vehicle and mean that prospective tenants realistically do not need a private motor vehicle for their everyday activities to reside at this site. Each property would be provided with 2 no. parking spaces, cycle storage facilities and EVCP.

7.36 The proposal incorporates measures to facilitate the development and ensure no severe impacts on the highway safety of the area. The design incorporates adequate visibility, highway dimensions, geometry and turning space within the site for a service (supermarket delivery) vehicle and refuse collection point.

7.37 Paragraph 109 of the NPPF specifically identifies that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the

road network would be severe. The proposed driveway design and supporting Transport Statement identify that neither situation would result.

7.38 Planning permission has previously been granted for 11 no. units at the site. This proposal is for 7 no. units. The proposal would have no worse impact than the previous scheme being for a lesser number of units than was previously considered acceptable at the site.

7.39 On this basis the proposal will raise no highways servicing, safety or parking issues and is considered to comply with Policy T2 of the Core Strategy and the Council's Maximum Car Parking Standards. The proposed development therefore presents no highway safety or technical highway issues for concern.

Ecology.

7.40 The application is supported by a Tree Report, Arboriculturally Implications Assessment and Method Statement, Phase I Extended Habitat Survey and Bat Survey's and BNG Assessment which collectively deal with the biodiversity interests at the site.

7.41 The proposal includes demolition of the existing buildings and the removal of several trees at the site. Several existing trees will be retained and are catered for within the construction of the development as recommended within the supporting arboriculture submissions. Replacement tree planting and landscaping is proposed to mitigate for the proposed tree loss proposed as shown on the submitted site plan. This is quantified with BNG assessment that demonstrates a >10% net gain.

7.42 The necessary bat surveys have been undertaken to assess whether any bats or their habitat would be affected by the proposal. The survey has identified that no bats were present at the site. Similarly, no evidence of other protected species has been found. The full findings are set out in the associated accompanying reports produced by Collington Winter. Any mitigation measures

identified as necessary can be secured by a suitably worded planning condition by the LPA.

7.43 There are therefore no ecology reasons to prevent the development taking place and the proposal accords with CS Policy S04.

Drainage.

7.44 The application is supported by a drainage report. The report identifies specific drainage proposals for the site in accordance with the national hierarchy for surface water disposal.

7.45 The site falls within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at the lowest probability of flooding.

7.46 The site could be suitable for infiltration based on its underlying geology. Permeability testing is required to explore further.

7.47 Based on the submitted drainage report and its findings there are no flood risk or drainage issues to resist the proposal. The proposal therefore complies with Policies G8 and EM/7 and EM/8 and NPPF.

Sustainable Development.

7.48 The NPPF seeks to promote sustainable development. It requires that the LPA should help achieve sustainable development by:

- *Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.*

7.49 The proposal would secure an efficient reuse of this existing previously developed site to provide 7 no. high quality family homes within a highly accessible urban location. This is in accordance with the Council's priorities for

housing development of brownfield sites and its own SHLAA allocation for the site.

7.50 This submission identifies that there are no landuse, design, residential amenity, drainage, or highways adverse impacts that would result from this development. The planning officer report to the previous application confirms the above raising no objection in any of these regards.

7.51 This submission identifies that the overall green infrastructure at the site would be improved with a >10% biodiversity net gain provided. The visual amenities of the area would be retained and enhanced by removing outdated buildings and poor health trees making way for new well-designed high-quality homes incorporating landscaping and tree planting that delivers an overall net biodiversity gain in accordance with policy G7 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF.

7.52 The proposal therefore accords with the development plan. Furthermore, there are no specific policies of the NPPF that indicate that development should be restricted.

7.53 The site currently therefore offers minimal social, environmental, or economic benefit.

7.54 Comparably the proposed development would deliver across all three strands of sustainable development as set out below.

7.55 In terms of **social benefits**, the proposal would:

- Provide new modern homes that would integrate into the surrounding built environment expanding the local community near a range of accessible existing services,
- Provide 7 no. family homes improving housing opportunities in the area.
- Provide a well-designed and safe environment for residents.

7.56 In terms of **environmental benefits**, the proposal would:

- Redevelop previously developed land promoting a more effective use of the site.
- Develop modern energy efficient new homes helping support a low carbon future.
- Minimise impacts on ecology and provide an overall >10% bio-diversity net gain.
- Maximise opportunities to replant new good quality landscaping and trees at the site.
- Employ a sustainable drainage system so as not to contribute to flooding in the area.
- Provide high-quality design and materials.

7.57 In terms of **economic benefits**, the House Builders Federation housing calculator estimates that 30 new homes would:

- Support the employment of 21 people.
- Increase open space, community sport, leisure spending by £5,643.4.
- Generate £5643.4 towards education spending which could provide up to 2 classroom spaces.
- Generate £84,371 in tax revenue including £7,906 in Council Tax revenue.

7.58 The proposal would provide social, environmental, and economic benefits in accordance with paragraph 8 of the NPPF as outlined within this statement.

7.59 The proposal therefore undoubtedly represents sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF and Policy SO5 of the development plan.

8. Conclusion.

- 8.1 The application seeks planning permission for the redevelopment of the site at Linkside. The proposed redevelopment comprises the construction of 7 no. detached dwellings including access improvements, car parking and landscaping following demolition of the existing dwellings and buildings on site.
- 8.2 Planning permission has previously been granted for residential development at this site at appeal by the Planning Inspectorate and subsequently renewed by Rochdale Council. This involved the loss of a significant number of trees at the site.
- 8.3 The site has subsequently identified on Rochdale's SHLAA as a brownfield site suitable for development for up to 11 new homes.
- 8.4 The proposal will result in a housing policy compliant high quality form of development within Middleton. The site is in a highly accessible location with easy access to public transport, shops, services, and amenities. The proposal will efficiently use the site to increase residential units in this preferred accessible brownfield location in accordance with Rochdale's SHLAA.
- 8.5 The proposal will provide an overall biodiversity net gain in accordance with the development plan and the NPPF. This will greatly enhance the quality of the green infrastructure at the site and its biodiversity in accordance with policies G6 and G7 of the development plan.
- 8.6 The proposal generates no other adverse impacts. The planning officers report for the previous application confirms the proposed development is acceptable in all other respects.
- 8.7 Viewed in the wider planning balance weight should therefore clearly be in favour of the proposed development.
- 8.8 It is submitted that the individual merits of the proposal, in respect of compliance with local and national planning requirements, as set out within this statement,

should be given full and significant weight in the determination and support of the application.

8.9 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications to be determined in accordance with the statutory Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

8.10 The NPPF seeks to achieve sustainable development. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF specifies there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

8.11 This proposal is considered to accord with the main aims and objectives of the development plan. There are no economic, social, or environmental negative impacts that result from the development. The proposal would therefore result in sustainable development in accordance with development plan and the NPPF.

8.12 It is therefore respectfully requested that the LPA grant planning permission for the development as proposed.

APPENDIX 1: Derek Richardson (Greater Manchester Ecology Unit) consultation response to previous application.

I have now had the opportunity to consider further representations made on this application, update myself on previous planning applications and tree comments relevant to the site, and to visit the site accompanied by the planning agent to inspect the trees on the site and the development proposals. It was a useful meeting and as a result I would make the following changes to my initial comments on the development (*note tree numbers are those referred to in the tree survey report provided with the application*)

- **T10, Willow protected by TPO.** Some Willows do have a natural tendency to be brittle and can crack , but this tree has clearly lost a number of branches relatively recently, is showing other signs of fracture and there are some signs of distress in the crown. Given this overall condition, and taking into account the views of the previous Tree Officer following previous branch fall that the tree did not merit further protection, I would accept that this tree could be removed to facilitate the development. It would need to be removed soon in any case due to poor condition.
- **T9, Lime on boundary protected by TPO.** This tree is in an overall reasonable condition but it has been poorly pruned a number of times in the past and as a result now exhibits a very dense crown. The tree is not yet fully mature and has some way to go before reaching its full growth potential; it is a high forest tree in a modest rear garden. It is already causing harm to boundary structures and has significant potential to cause further harm to the neighbouring property over time. It will also cause harm to residential amenity because of the dense shade which the tree will be causing, and will cause in the future. The tree will also pose significant issues for new residents of the planned housing development. I have considered whether it would be possible to further prune the tree to mitigate these issues, but this would be a temporary stop-gap measure, would likely add to the mis-shapen crown and further increase shading issues, and it will not prevent root damage to property. I have therefore concluded that I would not consider that the loss of the tree would be particularly egregious, such that the planning application could be refused for this reason.
- **T12 and T13** are good condition semi-mature trees close to site boundaries. Contrary to my previous comments, it ought to be possible to retain these trees and allow the development, although crown lifting will be required on both trees and root barriers may need to be installed during construction of the closest new houses to prevent future root encroachment.
- My comments in relation to **T3** remain unchanged – although a this is a reasonable tree it does not greatly contribute to the local tree scape and I would not object to its removal.
- I note that **T22**, a Sycamore included in the TPO can now be retained (the tree may have been lost in previous iterations of the development layout).
- The hedgerow marked **G11** in the tree report comprises a poorly pruned row of Leyland Cypress. The trees had grown too large to form a coherent hedgerow and have been recently heavily topped, resulting in an unsightly and poorly functioning boundary feature which is unlikely to recover well from the pruning works. My advice would be to remove this hedgerow and replace it with a more suitable hedgerow, e.g. *Crataegus* or *Prunus laurocerasus*, as part of any new landscaping scheme.

- Other trees within the plot are essentially garden trees without particularly substantive arboricultural merit.
- It would be possible to introduce new (compensatory) tree and shrub planting into the layout, although with small, more appropriate species (e.g. Magnolia or *Amelanchier sp*)



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