

Holroyd Street, Rochdale,
OL16 1SY

Design & Access Statement



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**SOLID
VOID**

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1.0 Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Solid Void on behalf of Ian Rennie to supplement an outline planning application for a proposed, 3-storey, new-build office development at the corner of Holroyd Street and Molesworth Street.

The site is presently a tarmac surface which is used as a car sales forecourt for The Motor Point Company. It is located within the central zone of Rochdale town centre, with the train, Metrolink and bus stations conveniently located within 500m. As well as being highly accessible, the site has been previously developed and as such is classed as a brownfield land. Molesworth Street to the east is one of the main arterial roads around the town centre, and as such, the site is prominently located and underutilised. This proposal seeks to create a new iconic office development to realise the full potential of the site, bringing it into beneficial use, and enhancing the quality of architecture in the locality whilst also referencing the historic mill / factory style vernacular of the town. To promote sustainable means of transport, the cycle storage has been designed with glazed frontage onto the active frontage of the main road, encouraging building users to travel by bike, making a highly visible and prominent statement. The shower and changing facilities within the new office block are also proposed to be high spec, as another way to encourage less reliance on cars for transport.

Holroyd Street by contrast is used very infrequently, and this is why access to the site has been suggested here for cars, pedestrians, and waste collection. The landscaping has been enhanced from zero soft landscaping and biodiversity to a proposal consisting of 14no. new trees (native species), shrub planting, and we would also welcome the chance to include bat and bird boxes to encourage wildlife and provide habitats for endangered species.

2.0 Planning Policy

The applicable planning policies in respect of this application are as follows:

Rochdale's Core Strategy (adopted 2016)

EC/3 – Mixed Employment Zone

A/24 – Strategic Highway Network

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

The site is designated as a 'mixed employment zone' according to Rochdale's UDP map and an office use would be compatible. Furthermore, it would diversify the employment opportunities in this zone by offering office suites to the market, whereas the existing units are typically industrial in style.

3.0 Use

This planning application seeks to create a new office development under use Class E, including associated cycle storage, changing facilities, plant room, refuse store, car parking and landscaping.

4.0 Amount

The proposals seek to create a single, detached, 3-storey office building with a net-lettable area of 694.4sqm (7474.5sqft).

5.0 Layout

The main entrance to the building is positioned to the west, directly accessible from Holroyd Street and the associated car park. The secondary access is via the cycle hub to the east (from Molesworth Street) which allows users to drop their bikes off before travelling through the building to the changing rooms and finally through to the main stair and lift core and office suites.

The layout of the building places the core centrally within the plan and above ground, a dedicated conference room occupies the tapered end of the building which creates a feature, curtain walling, glazed corner to the junction of Holroyd and Molesworth Streets.

6.0 Scale

The scale and massing of the built form is deemed to be appropriate in this locality for the following reasons:

- It occupies a prominent position on Molesworth Street, a main arterial road through Rochdale.
- There are examples of 1, 2, 3 & 4 storey properties in this area.
- The street would be enhanced by a 3-storey building as it is currently not very well-defined by architecture. It would improve the outlook of the street, which is mainly dominated by poor quality commercial units, and therefore it would not damage or cause harm to the character of the area.
- The adjacent street has a much larger and taller 4-storey Victorian mill building on Livesey Street.
- There are no overlooking or interface distances to consider per se.

7.0 Landscaping

The whole site is presently a tarmac surface with zero biodiversity.

The proposals seek to create a new access and tarmac car parking to the west of the site, surrounded by soft landscaping in the form of shrub planting and 14 no. (native) trees to be planted.

The main aspect of the development facing onto Molesworth Street will have a 'green' buffer edge including high quality tree planting and shrubs, to create an attractive outlook to the street.

The landscaping will seek to enhance biodiversity, promote habitat for endangered species and provide a pleasant environment for future staff who will work from the building.

8.0 Appearance

The building is proposed with an industrial style 'sawtooth' roof form, which subdivides the built form into smaller bays, and nods to the heritage and industrial past of Rochdale. The contemporary representation also has a modern feature in the form of a glazed, acute angle, which maximises the footprint of the building and creates unique conference room spaces.

The building's facing materials will be selected from a high-quality palette, including blue roof slates, heritage multi-style red bricks, stone cills, smooth blue engineering bricks, dark grey aluminium framed windows, doors and curtain walling.

Windows are punctuated into the façade in a regular, rhythmic fashion to mimic the repeating bay format seen in historical mill architecture. The proportion of windows are broken down into smaller modules using glazing bars, again, to reference traditional formatted windows.

The façade is further activated with blue brick string course detail, red brick soldier heads, stone cills and recessed brick panels vertically to further strength the sense of rhythm and repetition. Where windows are not appropriate to the room programme, these appear 'blocked up' with recessed features that give the sense that historical windows once existed.

Whilst the building has traditional references, it is very much intended to be delivered as a contemporary representation with two striking contemporary, glazed features in the form of the corner curtain walling and the frontage to the cycle hub.

9.0 Access

The vehicular access and car park is proposed from Holroyd Street for cars and pedestrians, adjacent to the proposed building entrance. In addition, the building's internal bin store and plant room can be accessed and maintained directly from the new car park by larger vehicles. Please refer to the accompanying Transport Statement provided by SCP for further information.

The cycle hub is accessible directly from Molesworth Street, presenting itself to the street and encouraging the use of sustainable means of transport. The store has the capacity for 44no. cycles and leads directly to shower facilities.

All thresholds will be level and accessible for people who are in a wheelchair or less physically able. In addition, the stair core will meet the design requirements of Approved Document M and the lift will provide access for all, to all floors.

The car park contains 13no. car parking spaces, all capable of charging electric vehicles and 1no. of the spaces is proposed to be a dedicated disabled space.

10.0 Sustainability

The new office will seek to be extremely energy efficient and sustainable through the following measures:

- Adopting a 'fabric first' approach, with responsibly sourced, high-performance insulation.
- Air tightness detailing to ensure that heat doesn't unnecessarily leak out from the building.
- Maximisation of solar photovoltaic panels to generate on-site electricity to serve power demand and air conditioning, etc.
- Providing excellent cycle storage and changing facilities to encourage cycle use, with very convenient links to trains, Metrolink and bus station.
- Consideration of low carbon technologies and heat recovery ventilation systems.