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Supporting Planning Statement

Full Application for erection of six dwellings

On Land both adjacent to Rochdale Road at
Hillbank Street and Church Avenue, Middleton, M24
2RB.

for Harrison Construction Ltd

September 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of the Applicant, Harrison Construction Ltd, in support of a Full Planning Application for 6no. residential dwellings with associated landscaping and car parking, following demolition of existing garages to two plots of land, both of which are situated adjacent to Rochdale Road at Hillbank Street and Church Avenue, Middleton, M24 2RB.

1.2 The proposed description of development is:

‘Full Planning Application seeking the construction of 6no. 5-bedroom, 3-storey townhouses with associated landscaping and car parking following demolition of existing garages’

1.3 This Statement describes the proposals and examines the planning considerations which they raise. It should be read in conjunction with the full package of plans and technical reports that also accompany the application.

1.4 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, determination of the planning application must be made in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

1.5 In preparing the planning application, extensive discussions have taken place with Rochdale Borough Council. These discussions have influenced the evolution of the scheme into its final form and the required supporting information which accompanies the application.

1.6 In summary, the development will deliver 6no. high town houses across two plots which are both situated adjacent to Rochdale Road at Hillbank Street and Church Avenue, within an existing residential area.

1.7 A formal pre-application (Ref: PREAPP/00089/23) request was submitted to the Council on the 23rd November 2023 and a formal written response was received on 15th February 2024. In accordance with the pre-application meeting the following documents are submitted:

- Application form, prepared by Zerum;

- Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment (ref. Arboricultural Method Statement Hillbank St & Church Ave Development_compressed), prepared by North West Tree Consultancy;
- Design and Access Statement, prepared by plan8townplanning (Ref. DAS Land adjacent to Rochdale Road at Hillbank Street and Church Avenue Middleton FINAL);
- Drainage Assessment (Ref. Drainage), prepared by Geosmart;
- Ecological Survey and Biodiversity Net Gain Metric (Ref. Hillbank Street_PEA+BNG Report_27.09.24; BNG Metric_, prepared by Etive Ecology; Technical Highways Note, prepared by SK Transport (Ref: Technical Highways Note 240731_SK22453_TN01(-00))
- Noise Impact Assessment, prepared by Enviro Solution (Ref. 2024-09-02 Hillbank Road and Church Street_Noise_Issued 2);
- Phase I Land Contamination Assessment, prepared by Geosmart.

1.8 The application is also supported by a full set of plans and elevations, prepared by the scheme architect, TDM Architecture, as set out below:

Plot 1 (Hillbank Avenue)

- Location Plan (Ref. Location Plan HB)
- Proposed Basement and Ground Floor Plan (Ref. Proposed Basement and Ground Floor Plan)
- Proposed First Floor Plan and Loft Floor Plan (Ref. Proposed First Floor Plan and Loft Floor Plan HB)
- Proposed Front and Side Elevation (Ref. Proposed Front and Side Elevation HB)
- Proposed Rear Elevation (Ref. Proposed Rear Elevation HB)
- Proposed Roof Plan (Ref. Proposed Roof Plan HB)
- Proposed Site Plan (Ref. Proposed Site Plan HB)

Plot 2 (Church Avenue)

- Location Plan (Ref. Location Plan CA)
- Proposed front and side elevation (Ref. Proposed front and side elevation CA)
- Proposed Ground and First Floor Plan (Ref. Proposed Ground and First Floor Plan CA)

- Proposed Loft Floor Plan and Roof Plan (Ref. Proposed Loft Floor Plan and Roof Plan CA)
- Proposed Rear Elevation (Ref. Proposed Rear Elevation CA)
- Proposed Site Plan (Ref. Proposed Site Plan CA)

1.9 The Application is also accompanied by a set of highway drawings prepared by SK Transport:

- SK22453-001 Site Access Proposals
- SK22453-002 Swept Path Analysis - Delivery Van

1.10 The remainder of this statement:

- Section 2 provides context and describes the sites and their surroundings;
- Section 3 sets out the pre-application discussions and public consultation exercises that have been undertaken;
- Section 4 describes the development proposals;
- Section 5 outlines the Development Plan framework and relevant national policy guidance;
- Section 6 provides a detailed analysis of the main planning considerations;
- Section 7 concludes by summarising the planning balance and main points raised in this document.

2. DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

- 2.1 This section provides background on the Applicant and briefly describes the sites, their surroundings and local setting, and outlines the relevant planning history. A more detailed description of the wider townscape context is provided in the Design and Access Statement.

THE APPLICANT

- 2.2 The Applicant, Harrison Construction Ltd, is an innovative construction company based in Manchester, who have assisted on a variety of projects including home extensions, commercial projects and larger residential spaces.

SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.3 The application comprises two plots of land both of which are situated adjacent to Rochdale Road at Hillbank Street and Church Avenue in Middleton.
- 2.4 The two plots of land are located on the Middleton/Rochdale border, close to Thornham Cricket Club and the Mercure Norton Grange Hotel, falling within the administrative boundary of Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (hereafter referred to as 'the Council').
- 2.5 The Hillbank Street site (referred to as 'Plot 1') is to the rear of 830 - 832 Rochdale Road and the Church Avenue site (referred to as 'Plot 2') is to the rear of 854 - 864 Rochdale Road. Both plots are approximately 0.3 miles from the Slattocks roundabout/Stakehill Industrial Estate.
- 2.6 **Figure 1a** overleaf shows the red line location of Plot 1 and Plot 2 and **Figure 1b** shows the location of the plots in the wider context.



Figure 1a: Taken from submission Red Line Location Plan



^ Figure 1b: Both plots (marked by red dot) in wider context (taken from Google Images)

Plot 1 (Hillbank Street)

- 2.7 Plot 1 is 913.18 square metres (0.22 acres) in total and consists of 15 x garage plots, which equates to 205m² existing garage area. The garages are a mix of sectional concrete and timber garages and some vacant plots. Some of these garages are vacant and dilapidated.

Plot 2 (The Church Avenue)

- 2.8 Plot 2 is 586.14 square metres (0.14 acres) and consists of contains 12 x garage plot which equates to 231m². The garages consist of mainly sectional concrete garages with a few of timber construction.

SITE SURROUNDINGS AND WIDER CONTEXT

- 2.9 The wider land uses surrounding both plots vary in nature. To the west of both sites lies Rochdale Road which is largely occupied by terraced and semidetached dwellings. To the north lies Thornham Cricket Club and to the south west is St John Thornham Church. A large proportion of area to the east is largely green field land and Tandle Hill Country Park is located approximately 850m east of both sites. St John's CE Primary School is located further east of the sites fronting Thornham Lane.
- 2.10 Stakehill Industrial Park, which includes distribution warehouses, depots, and engineering services lies approximately 250m south west. Beyond the A664 to the west of the plots is the Rochdale Canal Towpath, a railway line and Manchester Golf Club.
- 2.11 Beyond the M62 is a mixture of open space and residential land uses within the south of Rochdale town centre settlement area.

SITE ACCESS

- 2.12 Plot 1 is accessed via Rochdale Road and the access to Plot 2 is on Church Avenue directly opposite Grange Road.

SITE ACCESSIBILITY

- 2.13 Both the plots are located just off the A664 (Rochdale) which offers routes to Castleton and Rochdale, as well as linking Stakehill to centre of Manchester. The closest bus stop is located within a 2-minute walk which provides bus service through Rochdale to Manchester city centre. The closest railway station is Castleton which lies approximately 1.1km north of both plots.
- 2.14 There are a number of local amenities within ten-minute walk, including a local food store, a petrol garage, school, church and public house.
- 2.15 Rochdale Town Centre is located approximately 3 miles north of both plots and Middleton Town Centre is situated approximately 2.5 miles to the south west.

ECOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- 2.16 According to the UK Government Flood Map for Planning Service, both plots of land lie within designated Flood Zone 1, therefore meaning there is a low probability of flooding.
- 2.17 Both the plots comprise two rows of single-storey single garages of prefabricated construction. Land to the east is dominated by pastoral farmland. Land to the west comprises pastoral farmland, the Rochdale Canal and Manchester Golf Club course. There are no ponds located on site and none within 250m of the site. The Rochdale Canal SSSI/SAC is located 100m to the west.

HERITAGE

- 2.18 Neither of the plots are located within a designated conservation area. The closest designated heritage assets, St John Thornham Church and War Memorial (both Grade II Listed), which are located approximately 0.2 miles to the east.

SITE HISTORY

- 2.19 The two plots of land have both been occupied by allotments, garages and temporary structures since at least the mid-20th century. Prior to that the sites were unoccupied, open agricultural land.

PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.20 According to the Council's online planning portal, there have been no planning applications submitted on either of the plots.
- 2.21 There have been a number of planning applications submitted to the Council concerning the immediate surrounding area.
- 2.22 An application (ref. 22/01417/SCO) requesting a scoping opinion in relation to a proposed hybrid planning application for the development of up to 1500 dwellings with a new local centre was submitted in relation to land situated on land directly east to both the plots. The proposed redline boundary is presented in Figure 2.2 overleaf.

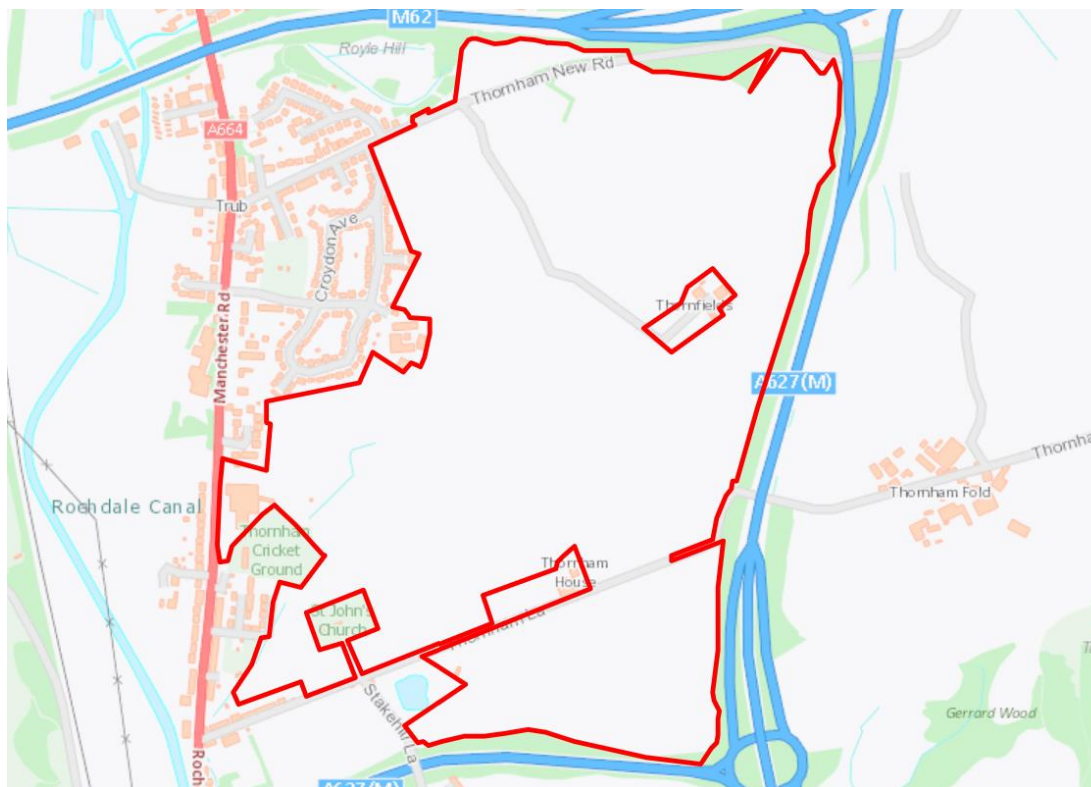


Figure 2.2: Proposed red line boundary of application ref. 22/01417/SCO

- 2.23 This request for a scoping opinion was submitted in October 2022 and on 15th February 2023, it was decided that an Environmental Impact Assessment would be required. The Applicant, Redrow Homes Ltd, are working with Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and partners to bring forward this Hybrid Planning Application for the development of around 1,500 dwellings and an extension to the existing primary school.
- 2.24 Following this, a hybrid planning application (ref. 23/00650/HYBR) was submitted on 25th October 2023. The application sought full planning for the erection of residential development of 233 dwellings (Use Class C3) with associated landscaping, means of access, drainage, and other necessary supporting infrastructure. It also sought outline planning permission with access (all other matters reserved) for residential development of up to 1147 dwellings (Use Class C3), mixed-use development, land for primary school extension, local centre and MUGA, landscaping, and supporting infrastructure.
- 2.25 The land between the Church and the application site is shown on planning submission

- 2.26 23/00650/HYBR to be landscaped as public open space, a change from the current agricultural use, with pathways and trees including an orchard between the church and the application site.
- 2.27 Just north of Plot 2 lies an existing All in One Garden Centre and a Prior approval (ref. 22/01388/DEM) for demolition of the main building and curtilage buildings was granted on 12th January 2023. This was submitted in association with Redrow Homes Ltd plans to deliver 1,500 dwellings on the Stakehill site as part of the northern portion of Policy JP – Allocation 2 from Places for Everyone 2023.

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 2.28 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that when determining a planning application, the decision maker must make their determination in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.29 The Council's adopted Development Plan for the Site currently comprises:
- The Rochdale Core Strategy, which was adopted on 19th October 2016;
 - The Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan from the 1999-2016 Local Plan;
 - Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan (2013); and,
 - The Places for Everyone Plan (March 2024).
- 2.30 The plots were previously identified as being with Designated Green Belt, notwithstanding the recent adoption The Places for Everyone Plan in March 2024 means that both plots have been removed from the Green Belt.

3. STATEMENT OF CONSULTATION

- 3.1 This Section provides background on the Applicant's pre-application discussions with Rochdale Borough Council (hereafter referred to as the 'Council').

PRE-APPLICATION STAGE

- 3.2 In accordance with Section 4 (Paragraphs 39 – 46) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), the Applicant has engaged in pre-application discussions with the Council.
- 3.3 This process has enabled the required supporting documentation to be agreed (summarised earlier) and advice received has been used to inform the proposals presented in this application.
- 3.4 The written response (Ref: PREAPP/00089/23) from the Council which was received on 15th February 2024 and based on the understanding that the Applicant sought to deliver 7no. dwellings across two plots. The plans have since changed and the dwellings have been reduced from 7no. to 6no dwellings across both plots.
- 3.5 At the time of pre-application submission, both plots of land were classified as designated Green Belt land as per the Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan ('UDP').
- 3.6 Notwithstanding, at this point in time, the Places for Everyone (2023) Plan¹ had progressed through rounds of consultation which had proposed to remove parcels of land across the Rochdale Borough from the Green Belt. The application sites (Plot 1 and Plot 2) were included in suggested parcels of land to be removed from the Green Belt.
- 3.7 As of the 22nd January 2024, the Inspectors had considered all of the representations made in response to the main modifications consultation and the GMCA responses to them, including their suggested further main modifications.

¹ Formerly known as the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework 'GMSF'

- 3.8 At the time of pre-application, the final version of the PfE was expected to formally adopted in Spring 2024 (around one month after pre-application submission).
- 3.9 This was noted by the Applicant within the supporting pre-application letter and it was argued that, although not formally adopted, substantial weight should be given to the emerging PfE Plan when assessing the pre-application proposals.
- 3.10 Within the formal written pre-application response, officers acknowledged that the emerging policy, Places for Everyone (PfE), was at an advanced stage and could be afforded substantial weight in decision making (page 10).
- 3.11 It was deemed that the principle of development with regard to the Green Belt would depend on the timing of full application against the context of PfE. Policy C2 of the Core Strategy was also referred to as it seeks

Visual Impact

- 3.12 The written response confirms that the proposals will result in a change in visual terms as the garages on the existing site are not visually dominant and blend into the allotment sites surrounding them and the rural backdrop to the east. Any future planning application would need to ensure that any new dwellings fit into the historic landscape and reflective of the character of the surrounding area.
- 3.13 The Council advised that the proposals should successfully integrate areas of soft landscaping. The scheme of 3 dwellings and 4 dwellings on the plots was considered to represent overdevelopment, therefore a reduction in the number of properties was recommended to allow a more appropriate design response to the context of the sites.
- 3.14 It was highlighted that the proposals would be assessed by policies DM1, P2 and P3 of the Rochdale Core Strategy, the Council's Guidelines & Standards for Residential Development SPD and the NPPF.

Impact on the living conditions of neighbouring properties and future occupiers

- 3.15 The submitted plans were deemed to comply with the minimum separation distances set out within the Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development SPD. It was considered unlikely that a residential use would result in a significantly increased level of noise and disturbance. The Council deemed that a residential use would be compatible with the surrounding residential use and the vehicle movements associated with the use is not considered to result in an undue level of disturbance.

Living Conditions of Future Occupiers

- 3.16 It was advised by the Council that due to the proximity of the motorway and the main road; an Acoustic Report should be undertaken to inform the design of the units to achieve internal and external noise levels as detailed above in the 'Consultations' section.
- 3.17 The Council deemed size of the rear amenity space proposed to dwelling 4 on the Hillbank Street site would be unacceptable and would fail to comply with the council's SPD standards. As the properties had no frontages and are aimed for family occupiers, the garden area would be considered too small. Reference was made to the recent Covid19 pandemic as a reason for sufficient private garden/amenity space for occupiers.

Highways, Access and Parking

- 3.18 In respect to the proposed scheme on Plot 1 at Hillbank Street, the written response stated that highways would require improvements to Hillbank Street as it is poorly serviced with no segregated footways or street lighting.
- 3.19 The Highways Officer also flagged that the layout did not provide adequate internal turning space for a standard sized collection vehicle and the proposed dwellings would be remote from Rochdale Road where refuse collections are likely to take place.
- 3.20 The feedback on Plot 2 at Church Avenue followed that as Church Avenue is a narrow carriageway and access to the proposed bays is directly onto its junction with Clifton Avenue which would introduce opposing turning movements directly onto the junction, vehicle access arrangements would need to be addressed.
- 3.21 Details of bin collection points were also requested as bins which restrict vehicular access on the highway or internal parking arrangements would not be supported.
- 3.22 Clarification was also required provided on how the middle properties of both sites would get their bins to the proposed collection point as bin storage.

Trees and Ecology

- 3.23 The Council's Ecologist requested that any future planning application be supported with a bat and bird assessment of the garages and mature trees along with a biodiversity net gain assessment and mitigation for the loss of any bat roosting and bird nesting habitat.
- 3.24 It was also advised that any future planning application should also provide an appropriate landscaping scheme that ensures the proposed development blends into the historic landscaping along with a Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment to include a Tree Protection Plan, Tree Removal Plan and Tree Constraints Plan.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 3.25 The Applicant did not submit any information on the proposed drainage. It was advised by the Council to submit drainage plans.

Land Contamination and Stability

- 3.26 The Council's Environmental Protection officer was consulted and advised that a Contaminated Land Investigation would be required should a planning application be submitted.

Minerals and Waste

- 3.27 Both of the plots are located within a Safeguarding Area for brick/clay, sand/gravel and coal. The Council highlighted that Policy 8 of the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan relates to Prior Extraction of Mineral Resources within and outside of Mineral Safeguarding Areas.

Concluding Remarks and Advice on making the Application

- 3.28 The concluding remarks confirmed that at the time the response was written, Places for Everyone, was yet to be adopted, therefore a planning application would need to be assessed against Green Belt Policy.
- 3.29 The final comments flagged that there are several matters that would need to be addressed including number of dwellings proposed, design/height, the level of hardstanding, landscaping and servicing details (including bin storage).

CHANGES TO THE PROPOSALS FOLLOWING PRE-APPLICATION FEEDBACK

- 3.30 Following the pre-application feedback, the Applicant has made some key changes to the scheme. These changes are summarised in the bullet point list below.

Plot 1 (Hillbank Street)

- Incorporation of more soft landscaping including the addition of front garden areas containing grass;
- Re-positioning of car parking spaces;
- Inclusion of bin store areas; and,
- Provision of dropped kerb crossing points and tactile paving.

Plot 2 (Church Avenue)

- Reduction in dwelling numbers from 3no. to 2no dwellings;
- Incorporation of soft landscaping;
- Re-positioning of car parking spaces;
- Provision of a 2m footway; and,
- Provision of dropped kerb crossing points and tactile paving

- 3.31 The following Chapter provides more detail on the proposed scheme.

4. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 This Planning Statement supports a Full Planning Application for the erection of 5-bedroom, 3-storey townhouses following demolition of the garages on site. The description of proposed development is:

'Full Planning Application seeking the construction of 6no. 5-bedroom, 3-storey townhouses with associated landscaping and car parking following demolition of existing garages'

- 4.2 The proposals have been developed following a detailed consideration of the site and local context whilst taking into consideration the national and local requirements for residential developments.
- 4.3 The aim of the scheme is to deliver high-quality, luxury-designed family houses that bring a vacant brownfield site into use to provide high-quality residential townhouses (Use Class C3) in a sustainable location.

LAYOUT AND FORM

Plot 1 (Hillbank Street)

- 4.4 Hillbank Street layout includes two car spaces to the front with gardens to the rear. Each house has a ridge line parallel to the street/front elevation with dual pitch roof.

Plot 2 (Church Avenue)

- 4.5 The two detached houses front Church Avenue. There is defensible space to the front of each with a shared drive between each dwelling. To the rear are private gardens and parking.

AMOUNT

- 4.6 The proposals seek to deliver 6no. 5-bedroom, three storey dwellings. The houses on Plot 1 on Hillbank Street are in the form of semi-detached dwellings. The two houses on Plot 2 (Church Avenue) are in the form of detached dwellings.

- 4.7 All dwellings comply with the National Described Space Standard.

HEIGHT, SCALE AND MASS

- 4.8 Each house is arranged over three floors, from ground level up, with the top floor set into the roof space. The detached houses on Plot 2 have an eaves height broadly consistent with the houses opposite on Church Avenue. These houses each utilise velux rooflights to the roof slopes with a small dormer window to the rear. They are of a scale similar to houses opposite.
- 4.9 The Hillbank Street semi-detached houses are similar to the Church Avenue houses except there is a gable feature to the front elevation and small dormer to the rear. The scale of the semi detached houses are similar to the vertical emphasis of the terraced houses to Rochdale, the only difference being the gable dormer feature to the front.

MATERIALITY AND EXTERNAL APPEARANCE

- 4.10 The facade of all the houses comprises a mix of stone and red brick with slate roof. The semi-detached houses have a vertical emphasis which corresponds to the terraced houses close to their location.

ACCESS

- 4.11 Each plot provides 2no. car parking spaces per dwelling, thus exceeding the Council's recommended parking standards. Cycle parking is accommodated within the curtilage of each house.

Plot 1 (Hillbank Street)

- 4.12 Following comments received at the pre-application stage, the arrangement of the Hillbank Street site has been reviewed and is proposed as a shared private drive arrangement incorporating parking to the front of the proposed properties. The street will be resurfaced to the arrangement indicated.
- 4.13 The existing bellmouth will also be resurfaced and the markings refreshed, and tactile paving installed at the existing dropped kerb crossing point.

- 4.14 A gate is proposed to control access to the shared private drive. This is set back approx. 10m from the give way line on Rochdale Road, affording space for a vehicle to wait. Access will be retained for the adjacent properties to the alleyway to the rear of numbers 836-864 Rochdale Road and to the allotment gardens.

Plot 2 (Church Avenue)

- 4.15 Following comments at the pre-application stage regarding the layout of the Church Avenue site, this has been reconfigured to provide a shared private drive arrangement with improved access geometry retaining the crossroad arrangement with Clifton Road. The number of dwellings has been reduced from three to two in order to achieve these modifications to the layout.
- 4.16 A 2m footway will be provided across the site frontage with dropped kerb crossing and tactile paving, this will also provide improved visibility for vehicles joining Church Avenue from the site. Parking will be provided to the rear of the properties, accessed via the shared private drive.
- 4.17 All reasonable provision for access has been considered as part of this proposal.

WASTE MANAGEMENT, RECYCLING AND SERVICING STRATEGY

Plot 1 (Hillbank Street)

- 4.18 A designated area of hard standing will be provided adjacent to the access bellmouth for bins to be moved to on collection day, for collection from kerbside. The proposed internal layout of the Hillbank Street will permit day to day service access for vans associated with supermarket deliveries etc. Swept path analysis for this type of vehicle entering and leaving in a forward gear is shown in Appendix C of the submitted Highways Technical Note, prepared by SK Transport.

Plot 2 (Church Avenue)

- 4.19 Servicing for the properties will be from kerbside on Church Avenue, the new footway on the site frontage providing space for bin collection.
- 4.20 Each dwelling includes for secure refuse/recycling storage (for 4no. standard 240 litre wheelie bins) within their relevant storage area at the side of the properties.

- 4.21 As a result, the proposals reduce the potential of street cluttering and will not detract from the character of the area.

5. PLANNING POLICY

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that when determining a planning application, the decision maker must make their determination in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2 Given this obligation, this chapter considers the Council's Development Plan for the area, as well as national planning policy guidance and any other material considerations relevant to the planning application. The Council's Development plan currently consists of:

- The Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (October 2016);
- The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (June 2006);
- Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan Document (2013); and,
- The Places for Everyone (March 2024).

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy

5.3 The Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy is the lead document in the Local Plan. **Table 5.1** summarises all the relevant Policies from the Core Strategy that are relevant to the site and the proposals.

Table 5.1 - Relevant Core Strategy Policies

Policy Reference	Policy Title
The Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (adopted in 2016)	
DM1 General development requirements	The policy ensures that all development demonstrates: • High quality design and improvement to the quality of the area • Compatibility with surrounding land uses and limited impact on existing and future residents • No impact through overshadowing or loss of privacy • Mitigation against impacts due to noise, air, dust, light and odour pollution • Provision of satisfactory vehicular access

	• No impact on health through land contamination or air quality • Minimisation of crime opportunity • Incorporation of landscaping • Assessment of ground conditions • No impact on biodiversity.
SD1 Delivering sustainable development	Asserts that when considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.
SO2 Creating successful and healthy communities	Seeks development to deliver sufficient housing that meets everyone needs, aspirations and is well designed to regenerate the area. New house must be supported by community facilities, service infrastructure and open space.
C1 Delivering the right amount of housing in the right places	The policy sets out the housing target to ensure there is always a deliverable five-year supply of land for new homes. It specifies that in the south of the borough, the houses delivered need to reflect the accessibility to the core of the region. There should be a focus on new housing close to key economic growth corridors/ areas and town centres.
C3 Delivering the right type of housing	Seeks to deliver the right types of homes, well designed and built to appropriate densities, to meet overall needs and aspirations of the borough. The policy wants the supply of larger and higher value housing in the borough to be improved. Housing should have a high standard of design and layout that produces attractive places, taking account energy efficiency. In the south of the borough the focus will be on widening housing choice and delivering housing that better suits the needs of existing and future residents
C6 Improving health and wellbeing	The policy seeks to improve people's health and wellbeing by reducing health inequalities. This will be achieved through promoting accessible new health facilities and services.
SO3 Improving design, image and quality of place	To improve design and quality of place, it is encouraged to promote sustainable development and protect and enhance heritage assets.

P2 Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage	Seeks to protect and enhance the borough's character and distinctiveness by Requiring new development to integrate successfully with the key natural features Requiring new development to take opportunities to protect important views Protecting and enhancing cultural and heritage landscapes. The policy also encourages using heritage assets positively and intelligently to strengthen identity.
P3 Improving design of new development	The policy requires all new developments, including associated landscaping, regardless of location in the borough, to adhere to high standards of design. It sets out ways to do this, which include enhancing the borough's identity through building material and respecting the surrounding context.
SO4 Promoting a greener environment	Seeks new development to minimise the Borough's contribution to climate, through providing energy efficient design.
G1 Tackling and adapting to climate change	This policy sets out a number of ways to address climate change and ensure growth, which includes locating growth in areas which are likely to minimise the need for travel.
G7 Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity	Seeks proposals to ensure sites are given full and appropriate recognition and protection. Opportunities for biodiversity must be exploited and no development should result in a net loss of biodiversity.
G8 Managing water resources and flood risk	The policy requires applicants to ensure that new development (including flood risk mitigation measures) does not lead to any form of increased flooding locally or further downstream, does not impede natural water and flood risk management, is not detrimental to existing or potential flood storage areas, contributes where possible to alleviating existing flood risk, is itself well protected from flood risk and ensures prudent use of water resources.
G9 Reducing the impact of pollution,	The policy sets out the ways to reduce the impact of pollution, contamination and land instability.

contamination and land instability	
SO5 Improving accessibility and delivering sustainable transport	To improve accessibility and deliver sustainable transport, development must be accessibly located.
T2 Improving accessibility	Development will be appropriately located to minimise the need to travel by car and the number and length of car trips made to access local amenities

Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (October 2016)

5.4 The Unitary Development Plan from the 1996-2016 Local Plan is still in place until the Allocations Development Plan is adopted.

5.5 The relevant policies from the UDP are summarised in the bullet point list below.

- Policy EM/3 'Noise and New Development' is relevant and states that development will not be permitted where it would lead to unacceptable noise levels to nearby existing or future occupants.
- Policy EM/7 Development and Flood Risk requires the submission of a flood risk assessment to demonstrate that proposed development will not increase the risk of flooding within the flood plain or adjoining area.
- Policy EM/8 Protection of Surface and Ground Water states that development proposals must make satisfactory arrangements for the disposal of sewage and ensure there will be no detrimental effect upon the availability of water resources to existing users and the environment.

Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan Document (2013)

5.6 The application site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area. Policy 8 of the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan relates to Prior Extraction of Mineral Resources within and outside of Mineral Safeguarding Areas. The Policy presents a number of 'exceptions' where it is acceptable for non-mineral development

proposals within the Mineral Safeguarding Area to not extract any viable mineral resources present in advance of construction.

Places for Everyone (March 2024)

- 5.7 Places for Everyone (hereafter referred to 'PfE') is a long-term plan of nine Greater Manchester districts (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth.
- 5.8 The PfE document has resulted in the removal of areas of land from designated Green Belt. The application site lies directly adjacent to Policy JP Allocation 2: Stakehill (see Figure 5.1 below- site marked by red dot). This area of land has been removed from the Green Belt and allocated by the PfE document to deliver around 1,680 high quality homes and around 150,000 sqm of high quality, adaptable industrial and warehousing floorspace within a 'green' employment park setting. This is relevant as the application site has also been removed from the Green Belt.
- 5.9 The other relevant policies from the Places for Everyone document are set out below in bullet point list:
- Policy JP-S1: Sustainable Development
 - Policy JP-H1: Scale, Distribution and Phasing of New Housing Development
 - Policy JP-G1: Landscape Character
 - Policy JP-G7: Trees and Woodland
 - Policy JP-G8: A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 - Policy JP-P2: Heritage

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Guidelines & Standards for Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (June 2016)

- 5.10 The above guidance focuses on design issues it is considered should be addressed by developers in formulating development proposals and which the Council will have regard to in considering applications for residential development.
- 5.11 The guidance sets out the following space standards:

- 21m between directly facing principal windows of habitable rooms, at an upper floor level AND 10.5m between a principal window at an upper floor level and a directly facing boundary of the curtilage;
 - 14m between a principal window and any directly facing two storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room;
 - 10m between a principal window and any directly facing single storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room.
- 5.12 Exceptions to these minimum space standards may be acceptable in some circumstances and applications will be considered on their individual merits.
- 5.13 The Guidance also gives advice on refuse container sizes.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- 5.14 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) is a material consideration to this planning application. The NPPF published on 27th March 2012 and was most recently updated in December 2023. The document has a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 5.15 Paragraph 8 advises that sustainable development comprises three dimensions: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions are interdependent and are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged (para 9).
- 5.16 The NPPF outlines that the primary objective of development management is to foster the delivery of sustainable development. Local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, working proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of an area (para 38).
- 5.17 Section 5 of the NPPF discusses the importance of significantly boosting the supply of homes (para 60). Paragraph 63 states that the 'size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies'.
- 5.18 Section 8 relates to promoting healthy and safe communities through encouraging social interaction within new developments, ensuring they are safe and accessible. The

NPPF states that planning policies and decision should plan positively for the provision of shared spaces.

- 5.19 The NPPF strongly supports sustainable transport, stating that such modes of transport should be considered at the earliest stage of development. Paragraph 109 asserts planning authorities should actively manage patterns of growth, including limiting the need to travel by non-sustainable modes of transports, such as cars. Development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or if the overall impacts on the road network would be severe (para 115).
- 5.20 Section 11 of the NPPF asserts that planning decisions should '*make as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield land''*'. Specifically point c of paragraph 124 is noteworthy as it states that planning decisions should give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs.
- 5.21 The NPPF actively encourages Local Planning Authorities ('LPAs') to promote the effective use of land and to support the development of under-utilised land, especially if it would help to meet identified needs for housing (paras 123, 124).
- 5.22 Section 12 of the NPPF relates to achieving well-designed places. 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.
- 5.23 Section 15 asserts that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and sites of biodiversity value.
- 5.24 Section 16 requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

6.1 Having set out the policy background, this chapter considers the principle of development and other considerations relevant to the determination of the application.

- Principle of Development;
- Design, character and appearance;
- Amenity;
- Heritage;
- Technical Considerations:
 - Highways
 - Trees
 - Biodiversity
 - Noise
 - Land Contamination
 - Drainage

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

6.2 The starting point in this assessment is the adopted Development Plan, specifically the PfE which removed land contained within the application red line boundary from the Green Belt. Green Belt policy therefore does not apply to this scheme, and is not considered further.

6.3 Policy JP – Allocation 2 from PfE has allocated the area directly adjacent to the application site for housing. The PfE document envisions the delivery of a significant amount of housing that will both support the new and employment development at Stakehill and other proposed employment opportunities across the North-East Growth Corridor.

6.4 As known from the Council's online planning portal Redrow Homes Ltd have submitted a) request for a scoping opinion (ref. 22/01417/SCO) for the development of around 1,500 dwellings and an extension to the existing primary school. On 15th February 2023, it was decided that an Environmental Impact Assessment would be required. The

Applicant, Redrow Homes Ltd, are working with Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and partners to bring forward this Hybrid Planning Application.

- 6.5 There is quite clearly a focus for housing and economic growth within this area, where the application site lies. The proposals, although minor, will deliver high quality, large family housing in area where housing has been identified as being required. It will thus increase the family housing offering within the local area. Given the size of the proposals, it is envisioned that this type of housing will be delivered much sooner than the proposed housing on the adjacent site.
- 6.6 Chapter 5 of the NPPF contains relevant national planning policies that aim to deliver a sufficient supply of houses. Paragraph 70 makes clear that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting housing requirement of an area and are often built out relatively quickly, and states that Local Authorities should support the development of windfall sites through policies and decisions, giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for housing.
- 6.7 In addition, the application site is now brownfield land and the NPPF encourages the effective use of brownfield land through the delivery of housing.
- 6.8 With the recent change in Government, there has been a notable shift in the narrative on housing need. The Ministerial Statement of 30th July 2024, entitled 'Building the Homes we Need' recognises 'the most acute housing crisis' and commits to increasing housing supply to a total of 1.5 million homes over the next five years.
- 6.9 The Appellant would also like to make reference to the Ministerial Statement's revisions to the standard method for calculating housing need. It has been calculated that this change would directly impact on Rochdale Council's annual housing target, resulting in an increased requirement from 616 new dwellings per year to 1,031 additional homes required across the borough per annum.
- 6.10 Given the above, the proposals should be a welcomed addition. The application sites are currently occupied by dilapidated garages, as seen by Figure 2a. The area is not aesthetically pleasing and could attract antisocial behaviour or flytipping. Therefore, the delivery of well-designed houses would be a vast improvement in terms of the visual amenity of local residents and the local environment in general.
- 6.11 The wider area, including land within the redline boundary, has been removed from the Green Belt boundary as the area is characterised by generally good accessibility,

a number of popular schools and proximity to a range of retail facilities and other services. It is recognised as forming part of the established settlement of Thornham

- 6.12 Given that the application is for 6 dwellings, affordable housing provision is not required.
- 6.13 The principle of residential use on the site aligns fully with Core Strategy Policies DM1, SD1, SO2, C1, C3 and C6. Policy JP-S1 and JP-H1 from the PfE have also been fully considered and accorded to. The provisions of the NPPF, specifically Section 5, and the most recent shift in Government narrative on housing delivery has been fully considered.

DESIGN, CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

- 6.14 In its current state, the site is little used and therefore vulnerable to flytipping and anti-social behaviour. It does not add positively to the visual quality of the area. The proposed high-quality designed residential dwellings will be a significant improvement to the local environment in terms of their appearance and the introduction of an active use.

Layout and Form

- 6.15 Core Strategy Policy P3 states that the layout and form of new developments should relate positively to visual connections between the development and its surroundings.
- 6.16 In response to the pre-application written response, the layout on Plot 1 (Hillbank Avenue) for the four houses are arranged as a pair of semi-detached houses in a terrace with parking to the front and private garden to the rear. They sit in linear formation and all the dwellings have consistent width and depth. Each house has a ridge line parallel to the street/front elevation with dual pitch roof.
- 6.17 The layout has been carefully considered to ensure it represents a continuation of the existing built form on Rochdale Road directly adjacent to the entrance of the site. The formation of the houses in a pair of semi-detached houses, mimics the two end houses on Rochdale Road (no. 836 and 838). There is a clear pathway adjacent to each dwelling in which residents can navigate to take their refuse from the bin stores to the plot access point for bin collection.

- 6.18 In response to pre-application advice, the application proposes two detached houses to front Church Avenue on Plot 2. There is defensible space to the front of each with a shared drive between each dwelling. To the rear are private gardens and parking. This continues the existing pattern in the locality, where each dwelling has a back garden. Both the dwellings on Plot 2 have the same width and depth. The gap between the two detached dwellings provides a clear pathway to take refuse bins to the bin collection point near Church Avenue.
- 6.19 The proposals will be fully integrated, both physically and visually, with the existing urban context. The layout and form of the proposals reinforces the sense of legibility with a clear and understandable environment.
- 6.20 The layout and form will contribute to the wider character and simultaneously contribute to the attractiveness of the development on its own.

Scale and Height

- 6.21 The proposed dwellings have been designed to respect and reinforce the local character by closely matching the height of the existing dwellings on Rochdale Road (no.836 and 838). The height of the ridge at 836 and 838 Rochdale Road is approximately 11m. The height of the proposed dwellings on the Hillbank Street plot are 9.4m.
- 6.22 The detached houses on Plot 2 have an eaves height broadly consistent with the houses opposite on Church Avenue. The Plot 2 houses each utilise velux rooflights to the roof slopes with a small dormer window to the rear. The Church Avenue houses are of a scale similar to houses opposite.
- 6.23 The sale of the semidetached houses on Plot 1 are similar to the vertical emphasis of the terraced houses to Rochdale Road, the only difference being the gable dormer feature to the front.
- 6.24 It is worth noting that the houses proposed as part of the adjacent large housing scheme (ref. 23/00650/HYBR) by Redrow have several different house types proposed from the Redrow range which do not all take design cues from the local vernacular.
- 6.25 This demonstrates that various design approaches are valid and as such the application proposes a suitable approach by aiming to deliver houses of a similar style and scale to those closeby.

- 6.26 The area is predominantly residential with houses of a similar scale to those proposed in this application. The proposal will fit in with the scale of density of the surrounding houses, with building heights generally being two storey with roof spaces.

External Appearance and Materials

- 6.27 The Council's Guidelines & Standards for Residential Development SPD states that the built environment should aim to ensure that development responds to local character and history, and reflects the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.
- 6.28 The area around the site is dominated by a mix of terraced and semi-detached properties. These are overwhelmingly red brick with slate roofs. The proposals look to complement the character of the existing area and are based on surrounding dwellings and this advice which was given during pre-application stage.
- 6.29 The architectural (external) skin of the proposed dwellings will be red brick with some render dominates, including sandstone and slate roofs. This materiality was selected through pre-application dialogue with officers.
- 6.30 The intended use of stone has been chosen to match and make reference to the materiality of local heritage asset Church of St John, and thereby seeks to create a distinct sense of place.
- 6.31 Chapter 12 of the NPPF contains relevant national policies aimed at creating well designed and beautiful places. Paragraph 135 states amongst other things that decisions should ensure that developments will add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture; and are sympathetic to the surrounding built environment.
- 6.32 The proposed external materials and façade are sympathetic to the character and appearance of the immediate surroundings, and ensure robust, durable and easily maintained buildings.
- 6.33 These ensure individual identity and distinctiveness, but also meet a key design objective in that the character of proposed development has a fundamental relationship with its surroundings. The proposal facilitates the creation of a high-quality place that positively enhances the overall character and image of the area.

Landscaping

- 6.34 Core Strategy Policy DM1 requires new development to incorporate soft landscaping schemes to reduce the monotony and visual impact of car parking areas by using substantial and well-integrated landscaping. This was also advised within the formal pre-application advice, specifically stating that well designed proposals should successfully integrate areas of soft landscaping and should avoid streetscenes which are dominated by frontage parking.
- 6.35 In response to this, the applicant proposes to incorporate soft landscaping including small tree planting and hedges near the front entrances of both plots. The car parking on Plot 1 is set back from the street scene and the car parking on Hillbank is to the rear so completely away from the streetscene. Given the minor nature of the application, the Applicant politely requests that should consent be given, the detailed landscaping information is secured via a condition attached to the planning consent.
- 6.36 Considering the above, the proposals are considered to accord with policies DM1, P2 and P3 of the Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-G1 of the Places for Everyone, the Council's Guidelines & Standards for Residential Development SPD and Section 12 of the NPPF.

AMENITY

- 6.37 The Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' (2016) contains a number of guidelines and requirements for the design and layout of new housing in order to preserve the amenity standards for surrounding residents. It promotes high quality design and a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
- 6.38 Included within the document are the expected space standards for new residential development. The proposals meet the local and national space standards. Furthermore, all the residential dwellings will have large private rear gardens for the enjoyment of prospective residents.
- 6.39 As such, the proposals are considered to accord with Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development SPD and Core Strategy Policy DM1.

HERITAGE

- 6.40 A Heritage Report has been prepared by Zerum and is submitted in conjunction with this application. The Report demonstrated that the proposals will result in no harm to designated heritage assets or their settings. Due to the position of development alongside the existing built form of the settlement, interspersed by established planting, there will be limited change to the assets' setting as a result of the proposal. Views will be set alongside existing built form. The setting of assets will be subject to very minor change and there will be no impact on significance.
- 6.41 The various assets and their significance will be preserved in line with the legislative requirement and local policies. No harm will be caused. The proposal thereby complies with local and national policy. There are no grounds to refuse consent on the basis of heritage impact.
- 6.42 The proposals are therefore considered to align with Core Strategy Polic P2, Section 16 of the NPPF and the PfE Policy JP-P2.

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Highways

- 5.1 A Technical Highways Note has been prepared by SK Transport. It sets out the transport issues and considers the proposed access as part of planning proposals. The purpose of the Note is to provide details of the amendments to the scheme to address the highways related queries.
- 5.2 The note confirms that a number of changes to the proposed access and parking arrangements have been made on both plots. These are summarised below.

Church Avenue

- 5.3 Following comments at the pre-application stage regarding the layout of the Church Avenue site this has been reconfigured to provide a shared private drive arrangement with improved access geometry retaining the crossroad arrangement with Clifton Road. The number of dwellings has been reduced from three to two in order to achieve these modifications to the layout.

- 5.4 A 2m footway will be provided across the site frontage with dropped kerb crossing and tactile paving, this will also provide improved visibility for vehicles joining Church Avenue from the site.
- 5.5 Parking will be provided to the rear of the properties, accessed via the shared private drive.
- 5.6 Servicing for the properties will be from kerbside on Church Avenue, the new footway on the site frontage providing space for bin collection.

Hillbank Street

- 5.7 Following comments received at the pre-application stage the arrangement of the Hillbank Street site has been reviewed and is proposed as a shared private drive arrangement incorporating parking to the front of the proposed properties. The street will be resurfaced so it meets the Council's standards for residential access.
- 5.8 The existing bellmouth will also be resurfaced and the markings refreshed, and tactile paving installed at the existing dropped kerb crossing point.
- 5.9 A designated area of hard standing will be provided adjacent to the access bellmouth for bins to be moved to on collection day, for collection from kerbside. The proposed internal layout of the Hillbank Street will permit day to day service access for vans associated with supermarket deliveries etc. A swept path analysis for this type of vehicle entering and leaving in a forward gear is provided within the Note. This shows a clear servicing plan.
- 5.10 A gate is proposed to control access to the shared private drive. This is set back approx. 10m from the give way line on Rochdale Road, affording space for a vehicle to wait. Access will be retained for the adjacent properties to the alleyway to the rear of numbers 836-864 Rochdale Road and to the allotment gardens.
- 5.11 The Technical Highways Note has demonstrated that comments made at pre-application stage have been taken on board by the Applicant. The Note provides clarity on bin collection points and how the access points will be amended to meet the Council's standards. The parking provision are in line with Council's standards.

Accessibility

- 2.31 Both the plots constitute sustainable locations and are highly accessible, located just off the A664 (Rochdale) which offers routes to Castleton and Rochdale, as well as linking Stakehill to centre of Manchester. The closest bus stop is located within a 2-minute walk which provides bus service through Rochdale to Manchester city centre. The closest railway station is Castleton which lies approximately 1.1km north of both plots.
- 2.32 There are a number of local amenities within ten-minute walk, including a local food store, a petrol garage, school, church and public house.
- 2.33 Rochdale Town Centre is located approximately 3 miles north of both plots and Middleton Town Centre is situated approximately 2.5 miles to the south west.
- 5.12 Given the above, the proposed development is considered to align with Core Strategy Policies DM1, SO5 and T2 and Sections 8, 9 and 12 of the NPPF.

Trees

- 5.13 An Arboricultural Impact Assessment and a Method Statement have been prepared by North West Tree Consultancy Ltd. An Arboricultural Survey was carried out on all trees within impacting distance of the site on the 13th July 2024.
- 5.14 The submitted report describes the extent and effect of the proposed development on individual and groups of trees both on and adjacent to the site. 13 individual trees (T001- T013), two hedges (H001 & H002) and four groups of trees (G001 – G004) were recorded within influencing distance of the proposed development.
- 5.15 To facilitate the proposed development incursion into the RPA T002 will be required. Mitigation methods to ensure the appropriate level of protection is afforded upon the retained trees is discussed within the Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) in section 9 of the report. It confirms that the works can be carried out and the trees protected. The report contains further information on tree protection during construction works.
- 5.16 The implementation of the proposed development requires the removal of 2No individual trees (T001 & T004) and two shrub groups (G003 & G004). These trees are of moderate to low quality.

- 5.17 The arboricultural reporting confirms that the retained trees can be successfully protected during the construction phase. While the proposals require the loss of 2 trees and 2 shrub groups, on balance this is acceptable as it will deliver a high quality residential development which will benefit from improved planting. Therefore, the proposals are demonstrated to comply with Core Strategy Policies S04, G1, G4, G7, G8, G9 and PfE policy JP-GZ and Section 15 of the NPPF.

Biodiversity

- 5.18 An Ecology Assessment has been prepared by Etive Ecology Ltd to identify habitats and species which are either of importance in terms of their conservation value or are afforded statutory legal protection.
- 5.19 The assessment comprised of an Extended UKHab survey, a desk study, a preliminary roost appraisal, an assessment of the likely impacts on the ecological value of the site and recommendations for further survey and/or mitigation measures to be implemented. A BNG Metric Assessment was also undertaken.
- 5.20 The Assessment finds that the site is of low ecological value. It indicates that there will be temporary impacts on hedgehogs, invertebrates and nesting birds. There would also be a risk of spreading INNS and of impacting the nearby Rochdale Canal SSSI/SAC. These are all capable of resolution through straightforward means.
- 5.21 Recommendations are made to avoid the nesting bird season, to provide artificial bat roosting opportunities, to minimise artificial lighting and to create gaps in fence-lines for hedgehogs. It is also recommended that a CEMP is prepared to control the risks posed to the nearby SSSI/SAC, and that an INNS Management Plan be prepared to eradicate INNS from the site.
- 5.22 In consideration of the above, the scheme is considered to accord with PfE Policy JP-G8, Core Strategy Policy G7 and Section 15 of the NPPF.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 5.23 In relation to Biodiversity net gain, the BNG Post Intervention score was 0.13 Habitat Units, which represents a -52.26% change in biodiversity value. All efforts have been

made to maximise the biodiversity gain provided onsite, and the scheme represents the optimum habitat delivery possible, whilst delivering much-needed homes and improving a site which is providing little positive benefit at present. Off-site Units will be purchased to meet the 10% BNG target. This is wholly acceptable in policy terms.

Noise

- 5.24 EnviroSolution Ltd were commissioned by Harrison Construction to undertake an assessment of noise affecting the proposed residential development.
- 5.25 The assessment has shown that the site is principally affected by noise from traffic during both the day and night time. The site is shown to be at a 'negligible' to 'low' risk from noise, in accordance with the guidance in the ProPG.
- 5.26 Calculated external and internal noise levels are shown to be at, or below, the BS 8233 guideline noise levels. Consequently, the site is deemed to be suitable for residential development, without the need for specific noise mitigation measures. Noise need not be a reason for refusal of planning permission.
- 5.27 Given the above, the proposals are deemed to accord with UDP Policy EM/3 Noise and New Development and Core Strategy Policy DM1.

Land Contamination

- 5.28 A Land Contamination Report has been prepared by Geosmart and has found that the preliminary risk classification of the site in relation to the proposed development is considered to be low/moderate.
- 5.29 Given the nature of the historical land use and therefore the potential for localised ground contamination to be present at the Site, it is recommended that a proportionate programme of site investigation works be undertaken in order to establish the presence or absence of contamination and to enable a quantitative assessment of the associated environmental risks.
- 5.30 In terms of the site's classification as an Area for Mineral Safeguarding, the Land Contamination Report confirms that the site is exempt from Mineral extracting due to being within an existing urbanised settlement area.

- 5.31 In consideration of the above and submitted document, the scheme is considered to accord with Core Strategy Policy DM, UDP Policy G/W/1 Waste Management and Policy 8 of the Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Development Plan Document (2013). It is wholly capable of being made suitable for residential development.

Drainage

- 5.32 A Sustainable Drainage Assessment Report has been prepared by Geosmart in support of this planning application. The Report confirms that the proposed Sustainable Drainage Scheme (SuDS) strategy is comprised of rainwater harvesting butts, permeable paving and soakaways to attenuate surface water runoff during the 1 in 100 plus 45% climate change event. Surface water will discharge via infiltration to the ground, subject to confirmation from site investigation, and the incorporation of SuDS.
- 5.33 A Site specific review of underlying ground conditions is recommended to ensure focused infiltration does not cause ground instability as a result of landslide or collapse associated with dissolution or shallow mining. Hazards that should be considered include soluble rocks, landslides, compressible ground, collapsible ground, shrink-swell clays, running sand and shallow mining. A separate Phase 1 contaminated land desk study has been prepared by Geosmart.
- 5.34 In light of the above, the proposed scheme is considered to accord with Core Strategy Policy DM1 and UDP Policies EM/7 and EM/8.

7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of the Applicant, Harrison Construction Ltd, in support of the following planning application:

'Full Planning Application seeking the construction of 6no. 5-bedroom, 3-storey townhouses with associated landscaping and car parking following demolition of existing garages'

- 7.2 The application has been considered against the policies of the current development plan and national government policies and guidance. It has been clearly demonstrated that the proposal has policy support and is aligned with the aspirations of national policy.

- 7.3 The proposals are for 6no. dwellings across two plots of land which are situated in an existing residential settlement. The recent removal of the application site from the Green Belt is testimony to the Council's long-term aspirations of delivering more houses within the Borough. The site is situated within a highly accessible area, close to various public transport routes and local amenities. The dwellings will enrich the choice of family housing within the area, delivering high-quality, large houses for new families wanting to expand in the Borough.

- 7.4 The key planning merits of the scheme are as follows:

- The proposals will add modestly to the quantum and choice of homes in the Borough;
- The proposals will contribute to creation of place by sensitively expanding the residential offering on Rochdale Road through the reuse of two brownfield plots which are currently detracting from the local environment;; and,
- Delivery of financial investment in the area during construction and once residents move in.

- 7.5 The NPPF makes it clear that there is a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' running through the decision-taking process. The proposed development is consistent with the NPPF's core principles. The scheme has been designed to a very high standard and makes use of underutilised land within a settlement.

- 7.6 Statute requires that this application be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations dictate otherwise. This proposal satisfies all relevant national and local policy considerations.