

Planning Statement

2, 4, and 6 Sutcliffe Place

Rochdale

Greater Manchester

OL11 2ES

Proposal: Change of Use of Existing Storage Building to Three Dwellinghouses.

November 2024

Building Design Services (BDS)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement is submitted by Building Design Services (BDS) who is working with the applicant to change the use of the existing storage buildings. The building is located to the rear of Oldham Road, Rochdale, and adjacent to Warringtons Yard. The proposed building was historically used as three residential dwellings. The applicant has recently bought the property through auction and is currently vacant with no formal purpose.
- 1.2 Compared to other housing markets in the North West and Greater Manchester, the Rochdale and north east Manchester housing market is generally less attractive. The housing on offer in the borough has stark differences in terms of quality and price and it fails to address the needs of existing or future residents. An oversupply of older terraced housing and a lack of high value housing across the borough means that it fails to attract and retain residents with higher incomes.
- 1.3 In terms of housing delivery, the government's aspirations for housing delivery and shift in emphasis to focus more on home ownership options means that the council will need to enable a variety of approaches and work creatively and collaboratively with development partners to deliver housing growth and tenures which meet needs.
- 1.4 National planning policy states that the Local Plan should identify and plan to meet the full objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing within the relevant market area. This includes an assessment of current demographic information, market trends, affordability and other relevant information.
- 1.5 An ambitious target of providing 460 additional homes per year is considered necessary to meet demand and to help regenerate the borough. The latest Housing Land Availability Assessment indicates that there is considerable scope to meet its housing target using previously developed sites, especially in the south, and with limited use of greenfield sites.
- 1.6 National planning policy changes have removed restrictions on the development of greenfield sites and as the Local Plan allocates significant capacity on new housing sites it is unlikely that past levels of windfall completions will be sustained throughout the Local Plan period.
- 1.7 The Council needs to focus the right type of housing in the right areas, maintain the regeneration of older areas of housing and social housing estates and ensure that the community infrastructure necessary to support areas of housing growth are provided.
- 1.8 The applicant would like to work with the Council in order to secure approval for the proposed use.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

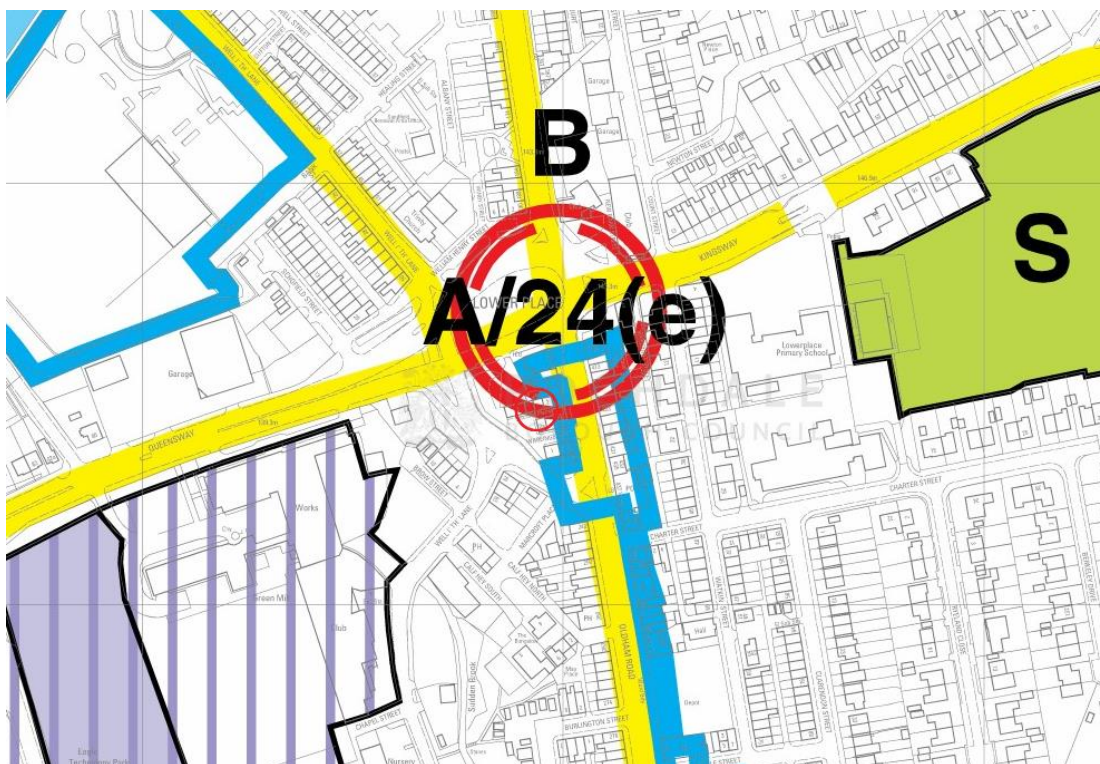
- 2.1 The application property is a two storey mid terrace warehouse building offering vacant possession. The building has been used for storage more recently and as dwellings in the past. The property is rendered to the front and rear with natural slates used for the roof. An open parking area is located to both the front and rear of the site. The end terrace property facing Oldham Road was occupied a printing business whilst the other end of the terrace adjacent to the A671 is occupied by a dentist.
- 2.2 The property is accessed via Wareings Yard which is off Oldham Road via A664 immediately to the rear of 218-220 Oldham Road t/a Shepherd Printers. The immediate surrounding area is a mixture of commercial and residential properties well served by a number of surrounding amenities. Rochdale town centre is a short walk in northern direction whilst the Rochdale Bypass (A664) offers good road links to the surrounding area.
- 2.3 The site itself is unallocated but just outside the Local Centre of Oldham Road with adjacent commercial properties fronting the main highway.



- 2.4 **Above:** The site is located to the west of Oldham Road Road in a mixed use tight knit location.



2.5 **Above:** Outline of application site in 3d view



2.6 **Above:** The Councils Local Plan indicates the site positioned in the defined urban area, but just outside the Local Centre of Oldham Road (Blue), there are no other designations.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The applicant is applying for full planning permission to change the use of the building from storage use to residential consisting of three 1-bedroom dwellinghouses. No external alterations are proposed as part of the conversion.
- 3.2 All the dwellings would be accessed from the southern elevation of the building, whilst No.6 would also be accessed from the northern elevation. Each dwelling would consist of a kitchen/living room at ground floor with a bedroom and separate bathroom provided on the first floor. The yard areas to the front and rear would be retained for shared parking with the other neighboring uses. The yard area would also provide bin storage for the proposed houses.
- 3.3 The Local Centre adjacent represents an appropriate location for such initiatives, offering the prospect of increased diversity, security and a general revitalisation, especially at nights and weekends. The Local Centre has the potential to provide unique housing opportunities which cannot easily be found elsewhere in the town, or indeed in the surrounding region. Such opportunities are likely to be particularly suitable for the young individuals.
- 3.4 Residential uses within mixed use developments can introduce diversity, security and life, especially at night and weekends.



- 3.5 **Above:** Image shows the front of the building, currently empty.



3.6 **Above:** Image shows the application site from the rear.

4.0. INVOLVEMENT

4.1 No formal pre-application advice in this instance has been sought from the Council. The scheme put forward is an acceptable proposal providing quality accommodation in this area.

4.2 Paragraph 39 of the NPPF states;

“Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality preapplication discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.”.

4.3 This planning Statement has been submitted as part of this planning proposal to provide a reasoned justification of the proposal using local and national planning policy and guidance.

4.4 The issues of highways safety, amenity of the surrounding area, design and the principle of the development are taken into consideration in the assessment below.

5.0 HISTORY

5.1 A history check has been undertaken which has revealed no planning history for the site.

6.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

- 6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.2 Rochdale's Core Strategy was adopted in July 2016 and is the key Development Plan Document. It replaces significant elements of the existing Unitary Development Plan as the document that sets out the long-term strategic policies for Rochdale's future development and will form the framework that planning applications will be assessed against.
- 6.3 The Core Strategy seeks to deliver sustainable development and growth in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It aims to increase investment in the borough and to make it a more prosperous place by 2028. The Core Strategy will have a major role in guiding the regeneration of the borough, building on the investment that has already taken place in some areas and identifying where to focus on next.
- 6.4 It looks to build on the borough's assets, heritage and identity and on its connections and relationships with neighbouring towns. In particular, the borough needs.
- 6.5 The following Local Plan policies have relevance to the proposal:

DM1	GENERAL DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS
P2	PROTECTING AND ENHANCING CHARACTER, LANDSCAPE AND HERITAGE
P3	IMPROVING DESIGN OF NEW DEVELOPMENT
C3	DELIVERING THE RIGHT TYPE OF HOUSING
G9	REDUCING THE IMPACT OF POLLUTION
T2	IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY

NPPF (2023)

- 6.6 The NPPF clearly states 'that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development' (paragraph 7). Paragraph 10 confirms that 'in assessing and determining

development proposals, local planning authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development’.

6.7 **Paragraph 11** states that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF. It goes on to say that ‘for decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay;
or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

6.8 **Paragraph 60** of the NPPF states:

“To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay”.

6.9 **Paragraph 124** of the NPPF states that Planning policies and decisions should:

d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained, and available sites could be used more effectively.

6.10 **Paragraph 128** of the NPPF states:

Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it.

- 6.11 **Paragraph 135** of the NPPF, advises that Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- 6.12 **Paragraph 115** of the NPPF states 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.
- 6.13 The general perspective of the NPPF is that planning should proactively drive growth and support sustainable economic development. It also states that planning should make effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed and sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

- 6.14 The government published its NPPG on 6 March 2014. This is intended to complement the NPPF and to provide a single resource for planning guidance, whilst rationalising and streamlining the material. Almost all previous planning Circulars and advice notes have been cancelled. Specific reference will be made to the NPPG or other national advice in the Analysis section of the report, where appropriate.

7.0 ASSESSMENT

Principle

- 7.1 The application site is Defined Urban Area as allocated under the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan. As such policy G/D/1 is relevant to any applications on the site and this establishes that development should be located in the urban area so as to support urban regeneration and protect the countryside.
- 7.2 Policy C1 of the Core Strategy establishes to;
- Maximise the potential of previously developed sites, including empty homes and buildings within the urban area to achieve a target of 80% of new housing of previously developed land; and ensure that sites are sustainable with good access to local services, facilities, green infrastructure, shops, jobs, schools and public transport.
- 7.3 Policy C3 of the core strategy is also relevant and its aims are to;
- 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;
- 7.4 The proposed use of the site for accommodation would make a better use of the site which is in need of investment. The site is becoming to appear unsightly in this prominent location, and in need of investment to a suitable functional use and where it would not have a negative impact on the surrounding area.
- 7.5 The site is well located in relation to small scale flats as well as typical family housing accommodation in urban areas for it to support urban regeneration and protect the countryside.
- 7.6 The proposal would provide good housing accommodation which is much needed in this urban area. It would enhance the character of the area by bringing an existing site back into use, it would consider the needs of the local community of protective surrounding built environment and provide future occupiers with services within walking distance and reduce the need to travel.
- 7.7 The effect on residential amenity by reason of noise or other nuisance would be minor given its location amongst other similar uses and by virtue of its location near the local centre.

- 7.8 It is also considered that the proposal would not have a detrimental effect on the safe and efficient operation of the existing transport and road infrastructure. Highways safety is further discussed in the relevant section below.
- 7.9 In respect of part of the above policies, the area is predominantly residential and therefore the proposed residential use is considered as a complimentary use to the existing character of the area and is located in a sustainable area with good access and facilities and which makes efficient use of the land whilst delivering an appropriate use for the site.
- 7.10 In light of the above it is considered that the principle of providing residential units at the application site is acceptable.

Amenity

- 7.11 Policy DM1 of the Core Strategy sets out a number of basic planning considerations that apply to all development. Further to this, paragraph 17 of the NPPF, containing the 'core planning principles', advises that planning should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
- 7.12 Policy G9 of the Core Strategy sets out that the Council will seek to reduce all forms of pollution by requiring that development does not have impacts that lead to an unacceptable increase in air, water, noise, light or other pollution.
- 7.13 It has already been established above that the principle of providing residential accommodation at the site would be acceptable, consideration should also be given to the immediate surrounding area and mainly to the existing properties on either side. The area in general and in its wider context is described as established mixed use, and the proposal would therefore complement the existing land uses around the area. It is however important to ensure that the proposal would not impact unduly on matters such as noise and other pollution effects.
- 7.14 In relation to noise, it should be acknowledged that there would be some road noise from the somewhat busy Oldham Road, surrounding streets during daylight hours. However, the site is close to existing properties, and in this location with sufficient acoustics, the noise from neighbouring uses and the road will not have a significant impact on the amenity of future occupiers, or from any other external sources. The rear elevation would face the parking area which is lightly used.

7.15 In respect of other matters, it is important that the development provides adequate space about buildings. Rochdale's SPD provides guidance;

(i) 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;

(ii) 14m between a principal window and any directly facing two storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room;

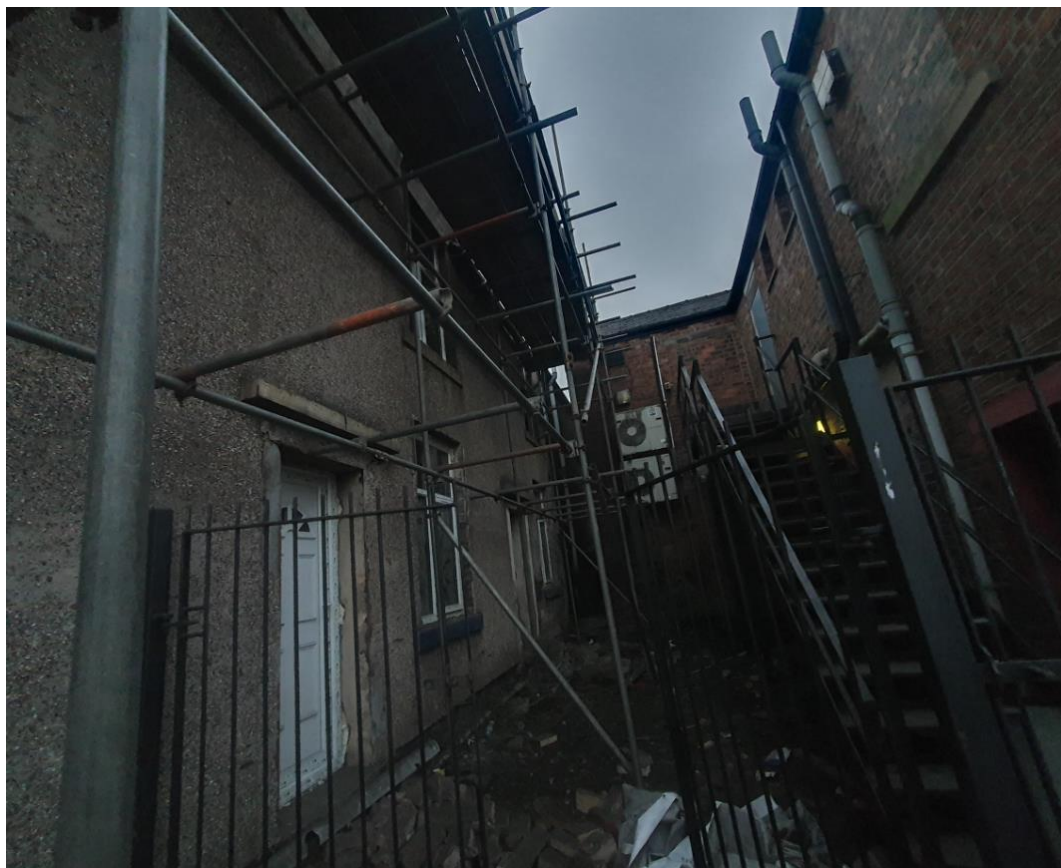
(iii) 10m between a principal window and any directly facing single storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room.

7.16 The guidance goes on to state that Exceptions to these minimum space standards may be acceptable in some circumstances and applications will be considered on their individual merits. For example, where the character and density of the surrounding area would be best preserved by reduced distances and this would not detract from the general levels of privacy and amenity typical in the area, then exceptions may be made.

It is considered that there would be no concerns regarding the distance to the rear elevations of the dwellings, more than 21m would be provided between No.6 and neighbouring buildings, whilst no windows are provided along the rear elevation for Numbers 2 and 4. These distances are therefore in accordance with the guidance provided in the SPD.

7.17 Although a distance of only 6m would be provided from the proposed front elevation of the dwellings to the large outbuilding to the rear of No/22 Oldham Road, it should be noted that no habitable room windows are located on the northern elevation of this neighbouring outrigger. Therefore, this distance from the habitable room windows of the application property to the neighbouring blank elevation is considered acceptable in this instance given the context and character of the area which is described as urban and close knit. As such, there would be no overlooking from the proposed dwelling given this would be in keeping with the surrounding context of the site.

7.18 In terms of overshadowing, the proposed dwelling would not be any taller and would continue the streetscape and building line along the important front elevation. The neighbouring property as mentioned includes a two-storey outrigger, however, although acknowledged that the relationship is not ideal, the distance is considered acceptable to provide sufficient light to reach these properties, especially at first floor level. Therefore, given the design and orientation of the building, the proposed dwellings would not be overshadowed to a significant degree to cause detrimental impact on amenity standards. The distances, and the design proposed is therefore in accordance with the guidance provided in the SPD.



Above: Existign relationship with application property to the left facing blank elevation of neighbouring outrigger.

- 7.19 As explained above, the proposed development would adequately provide the level of amenity that would be expected for a residential property within this area. The proposal would be compatible with the density and character of the surrounding development.
- 7.20 With regard to the living conditions of future occupiers of the property, it is noted that each habitable room within the building would be provided with natural light and ventilation, with an outlook onto the open areas and road to the front and beyond.
- 7.21 Bin storage areas would be provided to the front of the site away from the main public vantage points and away from the Oldham Road frontage. Sufficient garden space would be provided to the front and rear of the dwellings for residents to sit out. Landscaping would ensure the space remains private to the occupiers of the property.
- 7.22 In light of the above, it is considered that the development would provide adequate space about buildings, so as to protect future residents from any excessive levels of overshadowing and/or loss of privacy and a good

standard of living accommodation. The application is therefore acceptable in this respect and would meet with the expectations of Policies along with the relevant requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Design

- 7.23 Policy P3 of the adopted Core Strategy requires all new developments, regardless of location in the borough, to adhere to high standards of design. Policy DM1 of the Core Strategy states that all development proposals will be expected to demonstrate that they are of high-quality design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area, in addition to requiring a number of other basic planning considerations.
- 7.24 Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that ‘decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping’.
- 7.25 The property externally has been designed to continue the features of the original property with no external alterations proposed as part of this application.
- 7.26 In light of the above, the proposal would result in no undue harm to visual amenity and would be acceptable to the overall character and appearance of the area and the street scene. The application would therefore accord in this regard with policies P3 and DM1, the NPPF and SPD.

Highways

- 7.27 Policy T2 of the adopted Core Strategy relates to accessibility and Policy DM1 requires all development to provide satisfactory vehicular access with adequate parking and manoeuvring arrangements provided.
- 7.28 Paragraph 111 of the NPPF makes clear 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**’.
- 7.29 The proposed development would provide no dedicated car parking spaces, although parking is available to the front and rear car parks which is shared with neighbouring occupiers.
- 7.30 The application site is seldom used and is vacant, as such the proposed development would be quite intensive by comparison. The site is located in close proximity to Rochdale Town Centre and Oldham Road Local Centre and therefore in an accessible location.

- 7.31 Also, given its location close to a main road (Oldham Road) which links into the town centre, with excellent bus links and parking available on side streets and in the vicinity, sufficient provision for a development of this size in a location as sustainable as this (close to the main town centre and major bus route) is justified. Furthermore, the addition of a possibility of 2 extra cars using the road by way of this development would not strain the surrounding highways.
- 7.32 It is not expected that this proposal would impact negatively upon the surrounding highway network.
- 7.33 Bin storage would be provided in the front yard area where refuse would also be collected from, similar to the neighbouring businesses.
- 7.34 Given the details, it is considered the proposed development can safely be provided without resulting in harm to pedestrian and highway safety. The proposed development as demonstrated would be in accordance with Policies T1 and T2 of the Councils Local Plan and the NPPF where the proposal would not have a severe cumulative impact to warrant refusal of the application.

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 It has been demonstrated that the proposed development can be carried out in full compliance with the Council's policies in the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. The development would provide good quality family accommodation which would bring a positive contribution into the local area without creating a significant detrimental impact on the amenity of the local occupiers and residents.
- 8.2 Given the above, the proposal should be supported in full by the Council.