

Royale Barn Road, Rochdale,
OL11 3DT

Design & Access Statement



Revision /

27th November 2024

**SOLID
VOID**

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1.0 Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Solid Void on behalf of Hallmark Developments N.W. Ltd to supplement a full planning application for a two-storey commercial building, associated parking, access and landscaping on land adjacent to Aquacheck and Royale Barn Road.

The site is presently vacant and used infrequently as an access route through to a northern portion of land (owned by the applicant) which is leased to a battery storage business. Part of the site includes the current access from Royale Barn Road (owned by Property Nort West Ltd) through to the industrial park, which includes Castleton Timber merchants and Aquacheck. This existing access road sits on an acute angle to the main road and often results in articulated lorries having to manoeuvre across both lanes of Royale Barn Road to complete turns into and out of the site. The proposals seek to address highway safety concerns by realigning the road junction into a format that would alleviate the problem (please refer to SCP's vehicle swept path analysis).

The site is located within Castleton, in an area predominantly zoned for commercial activity. The site is highly accessible to the motorway network with junction 20 of the M62 a mere 1 mile away, and Castleton train station within 500m. The land appears to be previously undeveloped scrubland; however, its baseline Biodiversity value has been assessed and categorised within a BNG Assessment compiled by E3P ecology. The result of this assessment calls for 66no. new trees to be planted on the site as an enhancement measure to meet the statutory requirements.

This proposal seeks to create a new, high quality, commercial development to realise the full potential of the site and provide 5no. subdivided commercial units to the market where there is a demand for this size of unit. The architecture utilises red brick, and sinusoidal 'micro rib' silver grey cladding as its predominant material, with attractive dark blue contrasting features such as an 'I beam' fascia, window & door frames, and a protecting bullnose roof verge & fascia detail.

2.0 Planning Policy

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

Rochdale's Core Strategy (adopted 2016)

EC/2 – Primary Employment Zone

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 general industrial unit under use Class B2, including access, car parking and landscaping.

4.0 Amount

The proposals seek to create a single, detached, 2-storey commercial building which will be subdivided into 5no. smaller units with a ground floor net-lettable area of 768sqm (8,285sqft) in total.

5.0 Layout

The main entrances to the building are positioned to the southwest, directly accessible from the new associated car park opposite. Each subdivided commercial unit has at least 1no. glazed, personnel double door and a large, metal, vehicular roller shutter door. The building has secondary emergency personnel escape doors to the rear, facing Aquacheck in a north easterly direction.

Each of the subdivided commercial units can be fitted out with a mezzanine level which benefits from windows to the southeast typically and large strip rooflights.

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 an accessible position on Royle Barn Road, a main arterial road through this industrial employment zone.
- The scale is very similar to that of the building behind which is currently occupied by Aquacheck.
- There are no overlooking or interface distances to consider per se.

7.0 Landscaping

The whole site is unsurfaced, the baseline biodiversity has been assessed separately by E3P in their consultant report. Noted as a site comprised artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface, developed land; sealed surface, modified grassland, mixed scrub, ruderal/ephemeral and scattered trees, which are not anticipated to provide significant ecological value given their urban nature and/or their setting.

The proposals seek to create a new and improved access for articulated lorries into the Astra Industrial Park. New tarmac roads and parking bays create 15no. new car parking spaces to the west of the site, surrounded by soft landscaping and 68no. new (native) trees to be planted.

The main aspect of the development facing onto Royle Barn Road 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 mono-pitched roof form and the façade contains a selection of high-quality, silver insulated sandwich panel cladding, including both large format and 'micro rib' cladding. Edges, trims and window/door frames are proposed in a royal blue colour to provide a contrasting accent and visual interest.

Windows, doors and roller shutter doors punctuated the façade in a regular, rhythmic fashion to mimic the repeating bay format seen in a lot of industrial architecture.

The façade is further activated with red brick to the base/plinth of the building with some projecting, snapped header courses.

9.0 Access

The vehicular access and car park is proposed from Royle Barn Road for cars and pedestrians, adjacent to the proposed main building entrances. In addition, the bin storage will be kept inside the building and is easily accessed and maintained directly from the new access road. Please refer to the accompanying Transport Statement provided by SCP for further information.

To the northwest corner of the site is an area dedicated for larger vehicle turning, allowing 3-point turns to take place so that vehicles can leave the site in a forward gear.

At present, the existing access is via a relatively steep road which creates a 'hair pin' junction with Royle Barn Road. This arrangement currently results in articulated lorries having to cross to the opposite side of the road to swing their vehicles into the site, which is dangerous.

The proposals seek to significantly improve the access arrangements, thus avoiding dangerous manoeuvres into oncoming traffic.

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 15no. car parking spaces.