

# Plan:8 Town Planning Ltd

## Design and Access Statement

Proposal: Change of use from Bingo Hall to Indoor Sports Complex/Gym with retention of existing bar/restaurant facilities

Site: Former Mecca Bingo, Smith Street, Rochdale, OL16 1YH

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## **Design and Access Statement**

### **Introduction**

This statement responds to the Design and Access considerations as suggested appropriate in best practice guidance issued by CABE. The statement then discusses in more detail how the design came about as a result of analysis of the site and appropriate design policy.

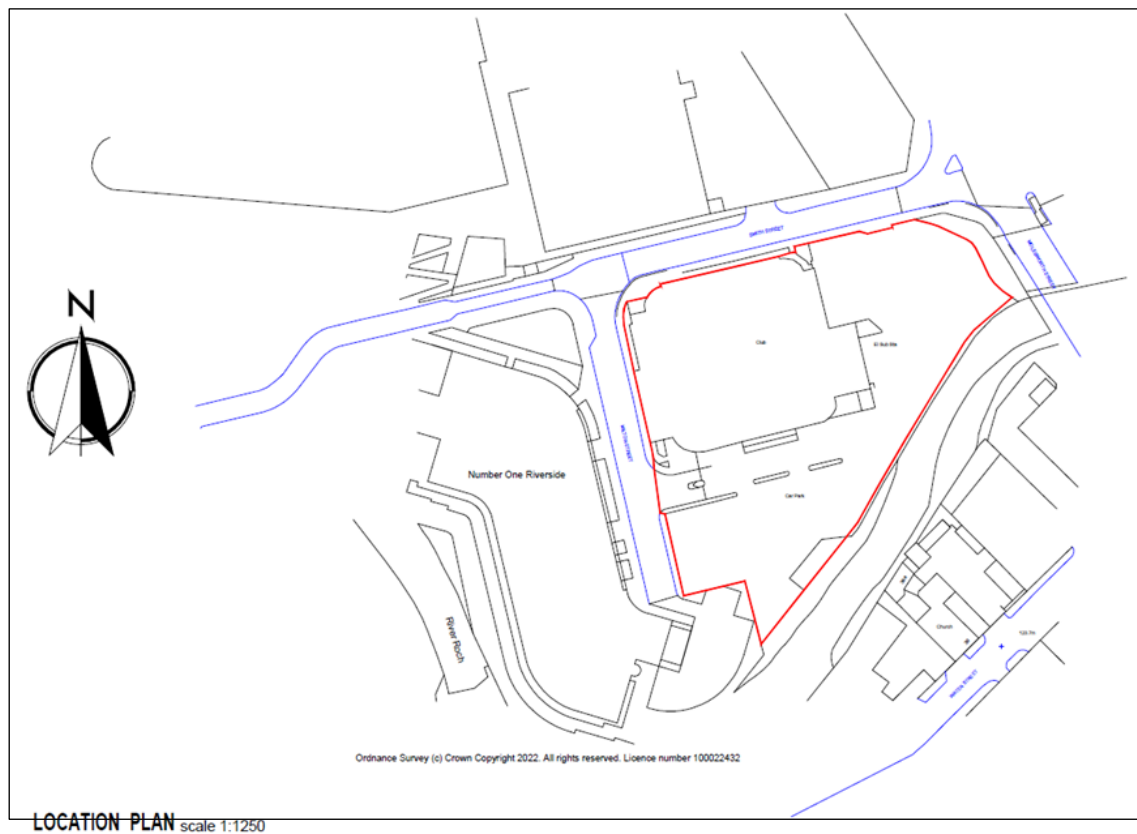
### **Existing site and its location**

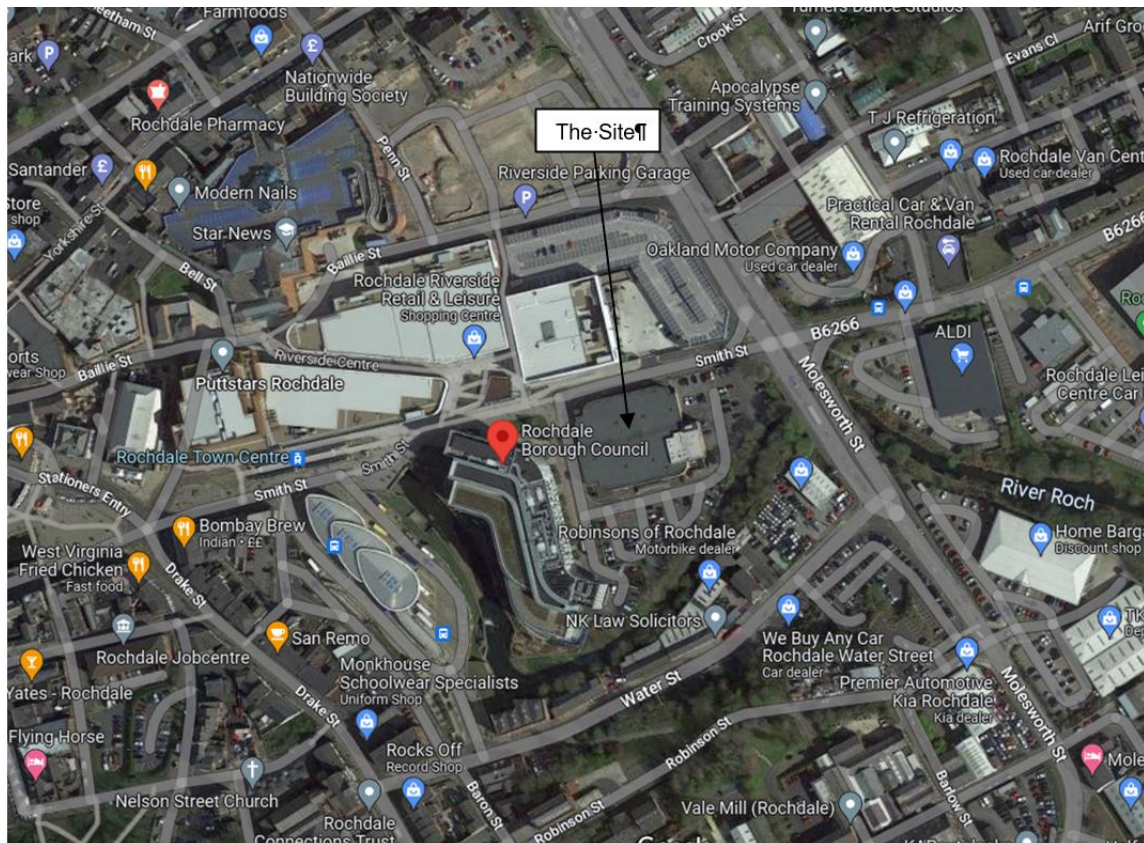
The existing site comprises an existing part single storey/part two storey, commercial building and it is situated in Rochdale Town Centre. It is located at the junction of Smith Street and Milton Street, and it wraps around the corner of these two highways. The buildings in the immediate vicinity of the site are predominantly commercial uses due to the town centre location. The building is currently vacant, but it was previously operated as a Mecca Bingo Hall for over 20 years until it closed for business in July 2022. The building has an irregular shape including some curved corner features and it is constructed in buff coloured brick and it has a grey flat roof. The map, aerial photograph and site photographs provided on the following pages clearly identify the site and its location in the town centre.

The site is not situated adjacent to any Heritage Assets such as a Listed Building, Locally Listed Building and it is not located in a Conservation Area so does not affect their setting.

## Proposal

The planning application proposal involves the change of use of the existing Bingo Hall building (Former Mecca Bingo) into an Indoor Sports and Fitness centre including football, cricket and gymnasium uses.





Photographs showing the existing building and wider street scene



Above Images Show: Front and side elevations



Above Images Show: Rear and side elevations



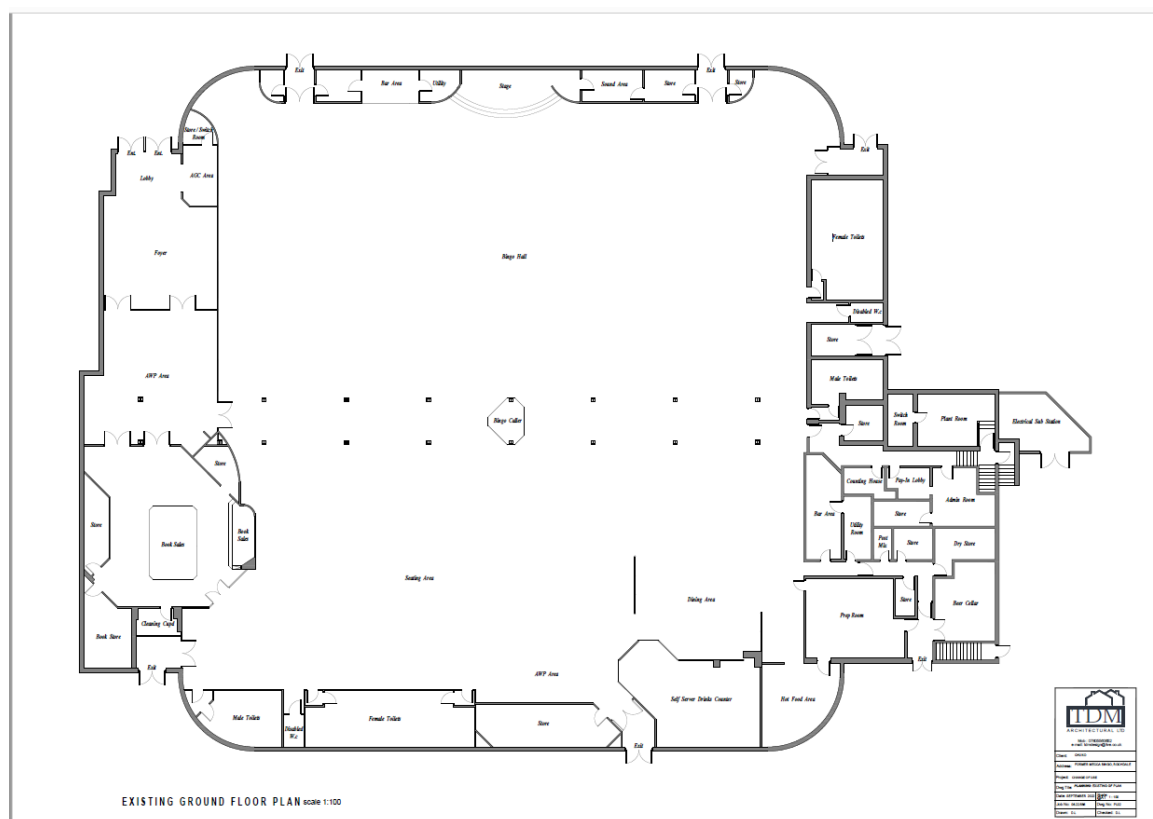
Above Images Show: Rear and front elevations

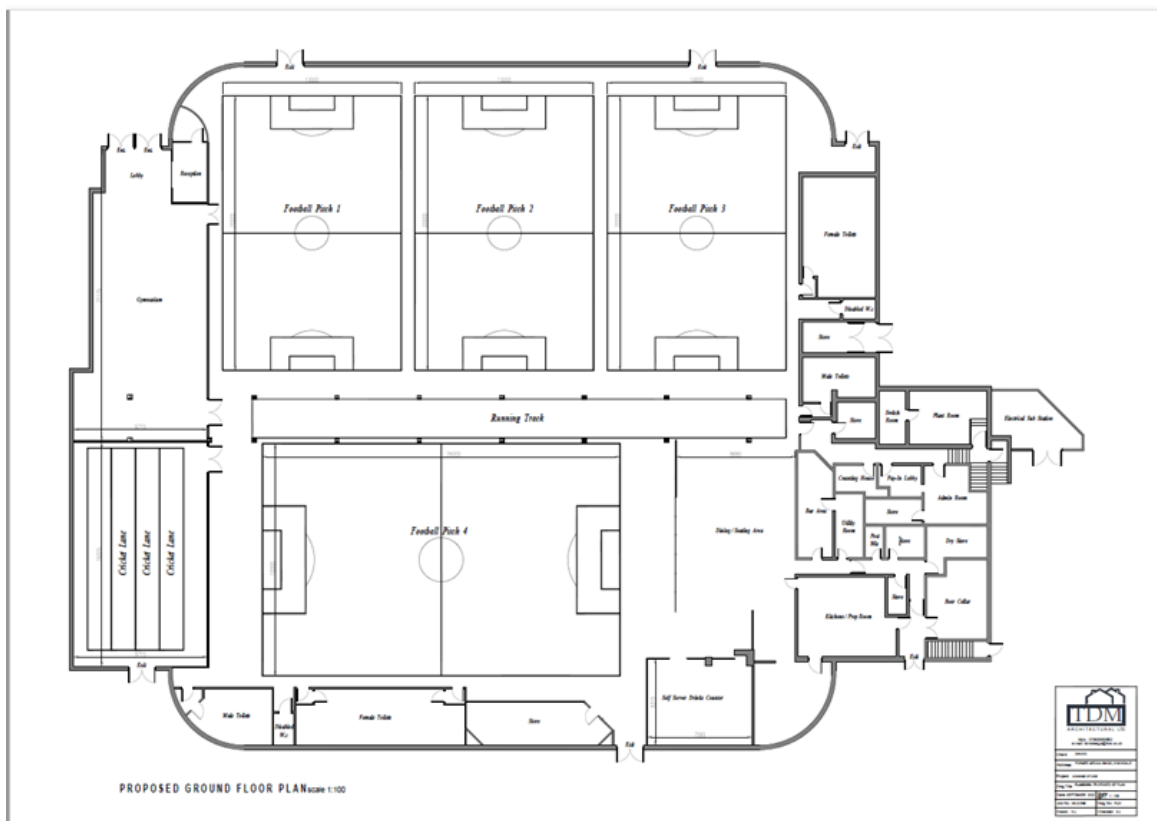
### Scheme Layout

There are no elevational alterations proposed to the existing building as part of the change of use and the applicant just intends to make changes to the large internal space. The centralised area that was used to conduct the bingo gaming operation and the associated surrounding customer seating areas would be removed and reconfigured to facilitate the creation of the sports pitches and fitness areas. The applicant proposes to retain many of the existing facilities including the main reception, bar and dining area, kitchen, customer toilets and storage and maintenance rooms as they suitable for the

new use. The only change will be the creation of some customer changing rooms.

There are four football pitches proposed within the building and they include three of the same size and a larger pitch. The three pitches measure 20 metres by 13 metres, and the larger pitch measures 26 metres by 16.9 metres. The size and layout of the pitches would be sufficient to enable small-sided football games to take place. There are also four practice cricket lanes, a gymnasium, and a small running track included as part of the sports and fitness business. A screenshot of the existing and proposed building layouts are provided below.





Scale

The building will continue to be part single storey/part two storey, with all the sports and fitness facilities taking place on the one level.

### Appearance

As previously mentioned, the applicant is not proposing to extend or alter the existing external appearance of the building as part of this change of use proposal. Therefore, its visual appearance will remain the same in the wider street scene. The applicant may choose to display some business advertisements on the building if the planning application is successful, but this will be the subject of a separate advertisement consent application.

## **Landscaping**

There is a small strip of soft green shrub plant landscaping at the site entrance, and this is to be fully retained. There is no additional scope for further landscaping due to the confines of the site and its relationship to the adjoining public highway and car park.

## **Context and Use**

The development will provide an excellent sport and fitness use within the town centre environment, which will provide health and wellbeing benefits to the local community and help to preserve and support the vitality and viability of the centre.

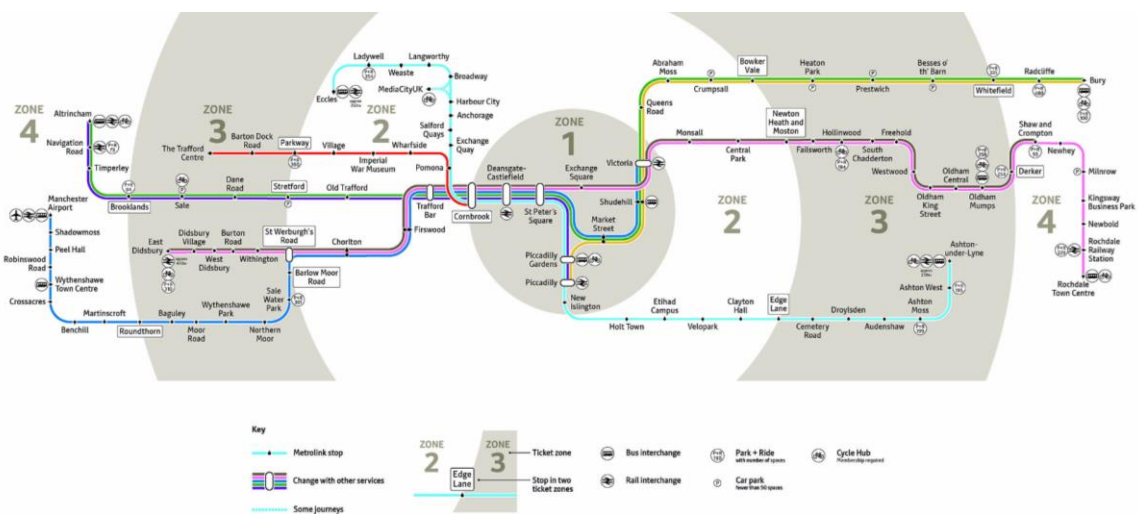
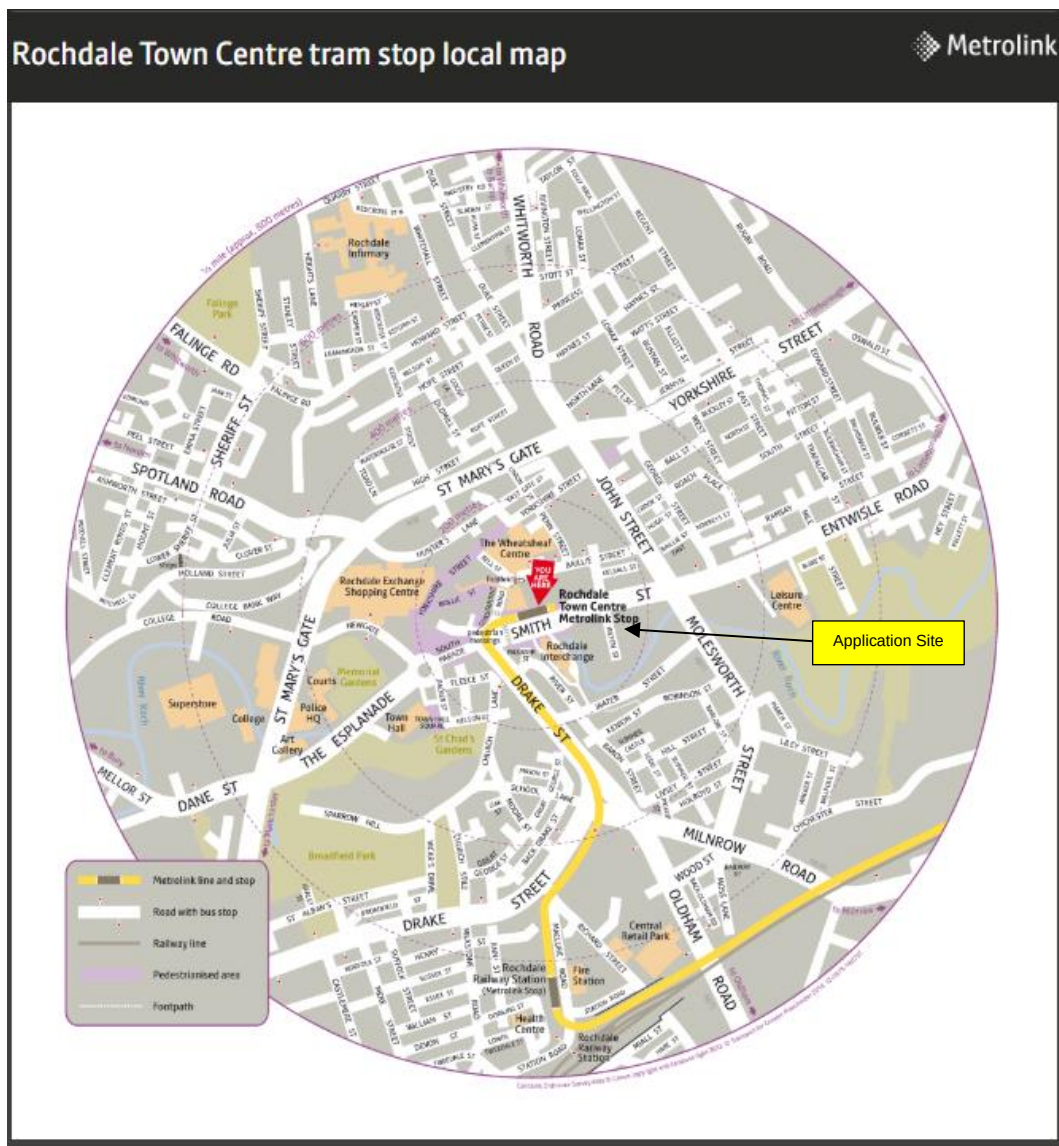
## **Site Accessibility**

The site is situated in a sustainable town centre location in terms of car parking and public transport accessibility. The wide A671 highway (John Street / Molesworth Street) runs to the east and serves the adopted highways on Smith Street and Milton Street providing easy and safe access into the site for vehicle users. There is a large level pay and display car park on Smith Street immediately adjacent to the building that is managed by Rochdale Council and this car park provides 130 spaces including 114 general use spaces and 16 disabled spaces. It is pay and display Monday to Saturday between 8am and 6pm, and then free to use outside of these hours. There are also numerous other car parks available for use nearby in the town centre should this car park be full and these are shown on the car park map below.



## Public Transport

The site is also very well served by public transport options with the Metrolink and Bus Station at Rochdale Interchange being located within 100 metres on Smith Street. Rochdale Train Station is also within close proximity approximately 800 metres away. The locations of the Metrolink, bus and train stations in Rochdale Town Centre are shown on the Transport for Greater Manchester map below. The Metrolink service runs to East Didsbury and stops at various places along the way including Oldham, Failsworth, Manchester City Centre, Chorlton, and Withington. The buses from the Rochdale Interchange are regular and serve local towns and villages and other destinations such as Accrington, Bolton, Burnley, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, and Rawtenstall. A copy of the tram network map and the various bus services that operate from interchange are also included below and on the following pages for reference.



Metrolink Route Map (Rochdale to East Didsbury shown in pink)

# Rochdale Interchange

Departure times, facilities, accessibility information and maps

## Rochdale Interchange

Location  
[Smith Street, OL16 1YG](#)

|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| All | 6   | 17  | 17A | 409 | 457 | 458 | 464 |
| 467 | 468 | 471 | 587 | 590 | 805 | 862 | 881 |
| R1  | R2  | R3  | R4  | R5  | R6  | R7  | R8  |
| R9  | R10 | R11 |     |     |     |     |     |

Bus Services operating from Rochdale Interchange

### Access to the site on foot

The application site will be easily accessible by foot for some users who work or live in the town centre or on its outskirts.

### Access to the site by bicycle

The applicant is happy to provide some secure bicycle storage provision at the site if required by the Council to promote sustainable transportation and healthy living

choices. There is a large fixed covered smoking shelter at the rear of the building adjacent to the Smith Street car park that could be easily adapted for bicycle storage - see photographs provided earlier in this statement.

### Access into the building

In terms of access into the building, the existing main entrance point on the Smith Street frontage is being fully retained for the proposed new use and this will provide safe and easy level access for all customers. This can be clearly seen on the photograph below. The building is part single storey/part two storey and level access is already in place inside and already DDA compliant. The applicant is proposing to retain all of the original toilets including disabled WCs and many of the other internal services such as the bar and dining / seating areas that were used as part of the bingo hall operation.



Customer access point into the building

### Provisions for Refuse and Recycling Storage and Collection

There is already a dedicated waste and recycling storage area to the rear of the building

that is used to accommodate the various bins. The contract details and frequency of collections will be in accordance with the buildings management plan. The bins are fully screened from view by a timber ventilated fence enclosure. The bins can be easily collected and emptied from the Smith Street car park – see photographs provided earlier in this statement.

### **Servicing of the Building**

All service related deliveries to the building will be made to the side and rear from the Smith Street car park. There will be no deliveries undertaken on the public highways on Smith Street or Milton Street.

### **Review of Site Policy and Layout**

The principle of the proposed use would appear to be acceptable in local and national planning policy terms. The application site is located within Rochdale Town Centre and offers an opportunity to fully utilise an existing commercial building, which is located within an accessible and sustainable location. The Rochdale Core Strategy Policies E1, E1/R, E2 and C8 (outlined below) would all appear to support large sport and leisure use developments that attract customers, provide employment opportunities, and overall promote the viability and vitality of the town centre to maintain it as a thriving and sustainable centre.

There are no external changes being made to the existing building and the applicant just proposes to reconfigure the internal space to create the sports and fitness facilities. From the street scene views, there will be no difference to the current visual appearance

of the building. In overall design terms, the proposal appears to meet the aims and expectations of Core Strategy Policies DM1 and P3, and Paragraph 130 of the NPPF, which amongst other things promotes good design. It also has good access for pedestrians and vehicles, good access to public transport, and it is well placed with the local road networks. Therefore, we consider that the proposed development is acceptable in terms of its town centre location, design and visual impact, relationship to neighbouring businesses and its impact upon the highway network.