

February 2025



Planning, Design and Access Statement including a Heritage Statement

**Proposed change of use of 44-46 Yorkshire Street,
Rochdale, OL16 1EA from (E use class) to a betting shop
(sui generis use class)**

**Relocation of existing unit at 7 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale,
Lancashire, OL16 1BH.**

On behalf of

Done Brothers (Cash Betting) Ltd

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2. Betfred Brochure
3. Marketing Evidence from BHT Chartered Surveyors

1.0 Introduction, Site Context, Marketing and Planning History

Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement including a Heritage Statement has been prepared on behalf of Done Brothers (Cash Betting) Ltd to support a Full Planning Application for the proposed change of use of 44-46 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale, OL16 1EA from (E use class) to a betting shop (Sui Generis use class).
- 1.2 This proposal comprises a relocation of the existing Betfred on 7 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL16 1BH and therefore the proposal doesn't look to provide another Betting Shop Premises in Rochdale.

Site Context

- 1.3 The premises are located on the pedestrianised section of Yorkshire Street opposite The Exchange Shopping Centre. Nearby retailers include, Greggs, and Warren James. The unit only relates to the ground floor only.
- 1.4 The site is separated from the neighbouring retail development on the east by The Banks passageway which provides access between Yorkshire Street and Baillie Street.
- 1.5 The site is due to be developed as part of a residential development to the first floor, with the full details of this application being provided within the Planning History Section of this assessment. The Betfred looks to occupy the new unit which has been created via the **23/01236/FUL application (Class E)**.

1.6 Figure 1 below shows the shop frontage of the unit currently:

Figure 1:



1.7 The lawful use of the unit was for A1 use that now falls under the new E use class in accordance with amendments made to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order in September 2020.

1.8 The unit sits within the Primary Shopping Area as identified under saved Policy S/3 of the UDP and detailed in Policy E1 of the Core Strategy and on the Maps of the Draft Site Allocations Plan for Rochdale.

1.9 The Unit is not listed but is within the Rochdale Conservation Area.

Marketing History

1.10 Marketing evidence is provided from the Marketing Agents Lyons Thompson Letts in Appendix 3 of this Statement detailing what marketing has occurred for the unit to try and secure a retail operator prior to this planning submission to change the use to a betting shop.

1.11 44-46 Yorkshire Street was formerly occupied by Poundland which vacated the property in July 2024.

- 1.12 The unit was extensively marketed for retail use from July 2024 and continued for a 7 months basis. The unit was actively marketed with a general lack of interest generated.
- 1.13 The marketing agents undertook a full comprehensive marketing campaign, whereby particulars were produced and circulated to the national and regional local markets. In addition, the property was listed on the LTL website and web platform, Completely Retail, as well as an onsite “To Let” marketing board erected on the property.
- 1.14 The enquiries for the property, were very limited and can confirm BetFred were the only meaningful interested party, who submitted an acceptable offer.

Planning History

- 1.15 Following a search of the Local Authority’s Public Access Webpage, the following Planning History is recorded:

23/01236/FUL - Change of Use of Vacant Retail Premises (Class E) to 26 Flats (C3 Use) with commercial use (Class E) retained at part-ground floor / basement level, together with a roof extension and other associated elevational alterations (Part-retrospective) | 44-46 Yorkshire Street Rochdale OL16 1JW – Approved on the 9th of July 2024.
- 1.16 This full planning application was for a residential development at 44 – 46 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale, OL16 1JW. The application proposed the change of use of the vacant retail premises (Class E) to 26 flats (C3 use) with commercial (Class E) use retained at ground/basement level, together with a roof extension and other elevational alterations.
- 1.17 The proposed development looks to occupy the new units which relate to the Yorkshire Street level elevation (176sqm) created via the 23/01236/FUL application.

2.0 The Proposed Development

Use

- 2.1 The proposed development seeks full planning permission for the proposed change of use of the ground floor of the vacant commercial unit (E use class) to a betting shop (sui generis use class). The development is based on the 23/01236/FUL application amendments to the site. This proposal comprises a relocation of the existing Betfred on 7 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL16 1BH and therefore the proposal doesn't look to provide another Betting Shop Premises in Rochdale.

Design

- 2.2 No physical alterations are proposed to the shopfront with the submitted proposed elevation plan showing how the shopfront design and fascia sign will appear on the street frontage.
- 2.3 The proposals seek to paint the existing shopfront blue RAL 5017 in the Applicant's corporate colours. This is a similar shade and design to the adjacent Halifax Bank unit. The current roller shutter will be removed as part of the shop refit proposals to open the unit frontage.
- 2.4 The design of the shopfront is appropriate for the Conservation Area and complements the adjoining Halifax Bank unit in accordance with Core Strategy Policy P3 which seeks to improve design of new developments.

Access

- 2.5 The unit would be accessed via the existing double front doors. An emergency exit with an alarmed door that opens outwards only is retained to the rear of the building as shown on the existing and proposed layout plan.

Other material matters

- 2.6 The unit has remained vacant despite being marketed for a retail use since June 2024. The occupation of the long-term unit has many positive impacts on the vitality and viability of Rochdale town centre and would provide a Bookmaker service and employment creation in the town centre alongside supporting economic growth.
- 2.7 Betfred is the world's biggest privately-owned betting company and one of the UK's biggest privately-owned retail outlets. Licensed betting shops are regarded as being main town centre uses under Annex 2 (Glossary) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021) as they are defined as a leisure and entertainment use. Betting shops as a main town centre use, have been evidenced to support the main retail function of town centres nationwide.

3.0 Planning Policy Review

- 3.1 The latest National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in December 2024 and replaces the guidance in the previous versions of the document. The framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The following policies are considered applicable to the proposed change of use application.
- 3.2 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF confirms the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development "There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:
- **An economic role** – build a strong, responsive and competitive economy
 - **A social role** – creating a high-quality built environment, with accessible local services
 - **An environmental role** – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment
- 3.3 Section 6 of the NPPF provides guidance on supporting economic development. Paragraph 85 confirms that Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- 3.4 Section 7 of the NPPF provides guidance on ensuring the vitality of town and local centres. Paragraph 90 confirms that planning policies and decisions should support the role that town and local centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.
- 3.5 Section 12 of the NPPF provides guidance on achieving good design in the urban environment.

The Development Plan

- 3.6 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires all planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 3.7 The Development Plan for Rochdale relevant to the proposed change of use comprises of:
- Rochdale Core Strategy (adopted October 2016)
 - Saved Policies of the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan 1999-2016 (adopted 1999 and extended in 2006 to cover the period to 2016)
 - Shopfronts and Security Shutters SPD (adopted 2012)

Rochdale Core Strategy (2016)

- 3.8 The following Core Strategy Policies are relevant to the proposed change of use.
- 3.9 Policy E1 - Establishing thriving town, district and local centres - focuses retail, leisure, cultural, office, residential and other development to promote the viability and vitality of all the borough's town centres to maintain them as thriving and sustainable centres and the preferred shopping and leisure destinations for people living, working and visiting the borough. To do this the Council will:
- Promote a scale of retail and leisure development in the above centres which is appropriate to their size, catchment and role taking into account the most up to date retail capacity figures.
 - Protect and safeguard the core retail function of Primary Shopping Areas through restricting certain non-A1 retail and retail uses within Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages.
 - Support the expansion of the evening economy through a number of mixed uses such as restaurants/bars/ theatres which will enhance the vitality of the centre, making it a more vibrant, active and safer place in the afternoon and evening.

In considering proposals for main town centre uses the Council will:

- (d). Seek to ensure a high proportion of A1 retail uses in the Secondary Shopping Frontages whilst accommodating, where appropriate, a wider range of other retail and town centre uses;
- (e). Support a change of use of a vacant retail unit (marketed for at least 6 months for retail use) in a Secondary Shopping Frontage where applicants can demonstrate that the use will clearly assist, and not harm, the vitality and viability of the centre.
- 3.10 Policy P2 - Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage – the Council will protect and enhance the borough's character, the distinctiveness of its town centres, housing areas and countryside, and the qualities of its landscapes, utilising the considerable potential of these assets in development and regeneration schemes.
- 3.11 Policy P3 - Improving design of new development – the Council will require all new developments, including associated landscaping, regardless of location in the borough, to adhere to high standards of design.

Saved Policies of the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 1999-2016

- 3.12 The UDP for Rochdale Borough was adopted in March 1999 and originally covered a Plan Period up until 2001. The Plan then underwent a review leading to adoption in June 2006 of the replacement UDP that further extended the Plan Period to 2016. Following the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2016, some of the UDP Policies were

'saved' to be read in conjunction with the Core Strategy Policies. The relevant saved Policies of the UPD applicable to the proposals are as follows:

- 3.13 Policy S/4 sets out guidance for secondary and central shopping areas. The policy states that at ground floor level fronting the street within the Secondary Shopping Areas in Rochdale, Middleton and Heywood town centres, only development of, or change of use to, shops, food and drink outlets and financial and professional services will be permitted.

Shopfronts and Security Shutters SPD (2012)

- 3.14 This SPD provides further guidance on appropriate shopfront design.

4.0 Planning Assessment

Principle of Development and Impact on the Vitality and Viability of Rochdale Town Centre

- 4.1 The proposal seeks to bring a vacant unit back into active use as a betting shop with a Sui Generis use class.
- 4.2 Licensed betting shops are regarded as being main town centre uses under Annex 2 (Glossary) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2023) as they are defined as a leisure and entertainment use. Betting shops as a main town centre use, have been evidenced to support the main retail function of town centres nationwide including linked shopping trips.
- 4.3 The unit as it currently appears, harms the vitality and viability of the town centre and the Conservation Area as it is closed up with no shopfront and has a metal shutter door covering the entire shop frontage which conflicts with the design guidance held within the Shopfronts and Security Shutters SPD (2012).
- 4.4 It is acknowledged that the unit is within the primary shopping frontage and has been detailed under Policy E1 of the Core Strategy and Policy S/4 of the saved UDP Policies.
- 4.5 Core Strategy Policy E1 confirms that support will be given to retail and leisure development in Rochdale town centre. Policy E1 continues that the core retail function of the Secondary shopping frontage will be protected and safeguarded through the restriction of certain non-A1 retail and non-retail uses.
 - 1) The Policy doesn't specify what non-retail uses are to be restricted and it is also noted that A1 use class was revoked in September 2020 when changes were made to the GDPO with the introduction of the new E use class which provides greater flexibility for town centres. The current unit has a lawful E use class but has been unable to secure a viable retail operator despite being vacant and marketed.
- 4.6 Policy E1 continues to states that when considering proposals for main town centre uses the Council will (d). Seek to ensure a high proportion of A1 retail uses in the Secondary Shopping Frontages whilst accommodating, where appropriate, a wider range of other retail and town centre uses.
- 4.7 As previously stated, Licensed betting shops are regarded as being main town centre uses under Annex 2 (Glossary) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2023) as they are defined as a leisure and entertainment use. Betting shops as a main town centre use, have been evidenced to support the main retail function of town centres nationwide. This proposal comprises a relocation of the existing Betfred on 7 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL16 1BH and therefore the proposal doesn't look to provide another Betting Shop Premises in Rochdale.

- 4.8 Part (e) of Policy E1 confirms that the Council will support change of use proposals of a vacant retail unit if it can be demonstrated it has been marketed for at least 6 months for retail use in a Secondary Shopping Frontage, and where applicants can demonstrate that the use will clearly assist, and not harm, the vitality and viability of the centre.
- 4.9 Marketing evidence from the Agents is submitted at Appendix 3 of this Statement which confirms that the site has been marketed since June 2024 but has been unable to secure a viable retail operator. As such, an alternative Sui Generis use is now proposed that is a recognised main town centre use that will support the main retail function of the secondary shopping area and frontage and the future vision for Rochdale town centre. The proposal accords with the requirements of Core Strategy Policy E1 and can be supported.
- 4.10 Betting shops can reasonably be considered to be a professional service as they offer a Bookmaker service in the town centre whilst retaining an open and attractive shop frontage with changing window displays to support and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre, strengthen its offering of shops and services and make a positive contribution to the built environment. In this regard the proposal also accords with saved UDP Policy S/4.
- 4.11 Taking all of the above into account the principal of the change of use is acceptable and policy compliant when assessed against national and local planning policies and the proposal would demonstrably support the vitality and viability of the town centre. This proposal comprises a relocation of the existing Betfred on 7 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL16 1BH and therefore the proposal doesn't look to provide another Betting Shop Premises in Rochdale.

Supporting the Town Centre Evening Economy

- 4.12 The proposal will increase footfall and provides an opportunity for linked trips to the wider town centre as well as contributing to the centre's later afternoon / evening economy up to 22:00 when traditional retail shops are typically only open 9-5pm. This is further detailed at Appendix 1 of this Statement and supported by Core Strategy Policy E1.

Supporting employment creation

- 4.13 The proposal is for a new betting shop in Rochdale Town Centre. A brochure for Betfred is provided at Appendix 2 of this Statement which details that each new Betfred store creates 6 new jobs as follows:
- 1 Manager
 - 1 Deputy Manager
 - 3 Cashiers
 - 1 Cleaner

5.0 Heritage Statement

- 5.1 The proposed change of use unit is not listed but is within the Rochdale town centre Conservation Area which was adopted in 1973 and then extended in 2011. As such, Core Strategy Policy P2 is applicable.
- 5.2 As detailed, the unit is long term vacant and has been closed since June 2024 with a roller shutter door across the shop frontage as can be seen at Figure 1 of this Statement. This is detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and conflicts with guidance for positive shopfront design in the Shopfronts and Security Shutters SPD (2012).
- 5.3 The proposed change of use would re-open the shopfront, provide an active and changing window display and a new fascia so it would appear similar to adjacent businesses along the street frontage.
- 5.4 The proposed shopfront colours of blue and white are similar to the adjacent unit and would complement the existing street frontage. No physical changes to the shopfront are proposed other than repainting with the existing double door access retained for the proposed Sui Generis use.
- 5.5 The proposal seeks to improve, conserve and enhance the Town Centre Conservation Area and the pedestrianised area, where public realm improvements are proposed as. In this regard, the proposal accords with Core Strategy Policy P2.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement including a Heritage Statement has been prepared on behalf of Done Brothers (Cash Betting) Ltd to support a Proposed change of use of 44-46 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale, OL16 1EA from (E use class) to a betting shop (sui generis use class) (Relocation of existing unit at 7 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL16 1BH.)
- 6.2 The unit has been vacant since June 2024 despite being actively marketed for a retail use but unable to secure any offers. As such an alternative but complementary main town centre Sui Generis use as defined by Annex 2 Glossary of the NPPF is proposed which supports the wider retail function of the town centre and the secondary shopping frontage.
- 6.3 Details of marketing undertaken is available to view at Appendix 3 of this Statement which demonstrates that it is unviable to retain the unit for purely retail use, the site has been marketed for a significant period of time but has been unable to secure a viable retail operator therefore a complimentary Sui Generis town centre use is now proposed to strengthen and support the wider retail function of the Town centre.
- 6.4 The principle of the change of use is demonstrably acceptable being compliant with National Policy in the Framework and Core Strategy Policies E1, E1/M. P2 and P3, saved UDP Policies G/S/1 as demonstrated in Chapter 4 of this Statement.
- 6.5 The proposed change of use would support and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre by bringing a vacant unit back into active use with a shop frontage and changing window displays within the primary shopping frontage. This proposal comprises a relocation of the existing Betfred on 7 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL16 1BH and therefore the proposal doesn't look to provide another Betting Shop Premises in Rochdale.
- 6.6 The proposal will increase footfall and provides an opportunity for linked trips to the wider town centre shops as well as contributing to the centre's later afternoon / evening economy up to 22:00 when traditional retail shops are typically only open 9-5pm. This is further detailed at Appendix 1 of this Statement and supported by Core Strategy Policy E1.
- 6.7 In view of the above, it is considered the proposal satisfies both national and local policy and represents a suitable and sustainable use for the long-term vacant unit. The proposal addresses all the relevant material considerations and, in this respect, we would invite the Council to assess the application and offer its support for the proposal.

Appendices (submitted as separate documents)

1. Betfred Market Research Findings Report
2. Betfred Brochure
3. Marketing Evidence from BHT Chartered Surveyors