

URBAN DESIGN CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Design Officer	Azhar Kapadi
Date	13.05.25
Application Reference	25/00195/FUL
Address	Land At Schofield Street, Heywood, OL10 1DH
Proposal	Residential development consisting of 9no' 4 bedroom dwellings with associated parking and landscaping

Introduction

The [National Design Guide](#) sets out the ten characteristics of a well-designed place. Well-designed places have individual characteristics which work together to create its physical **Character**. The ten characteristics help to nurture and sustain a sense of **Community**. They work to positively address environmental issues affecting **Climate**. They all contribute towards the cross-cutting themes for good design set out in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#).

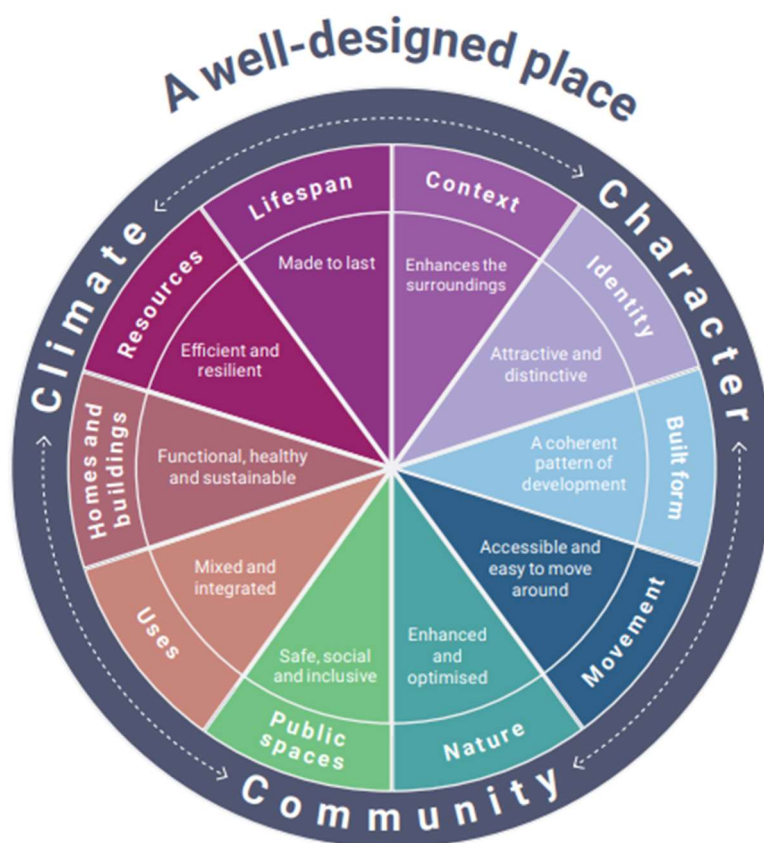


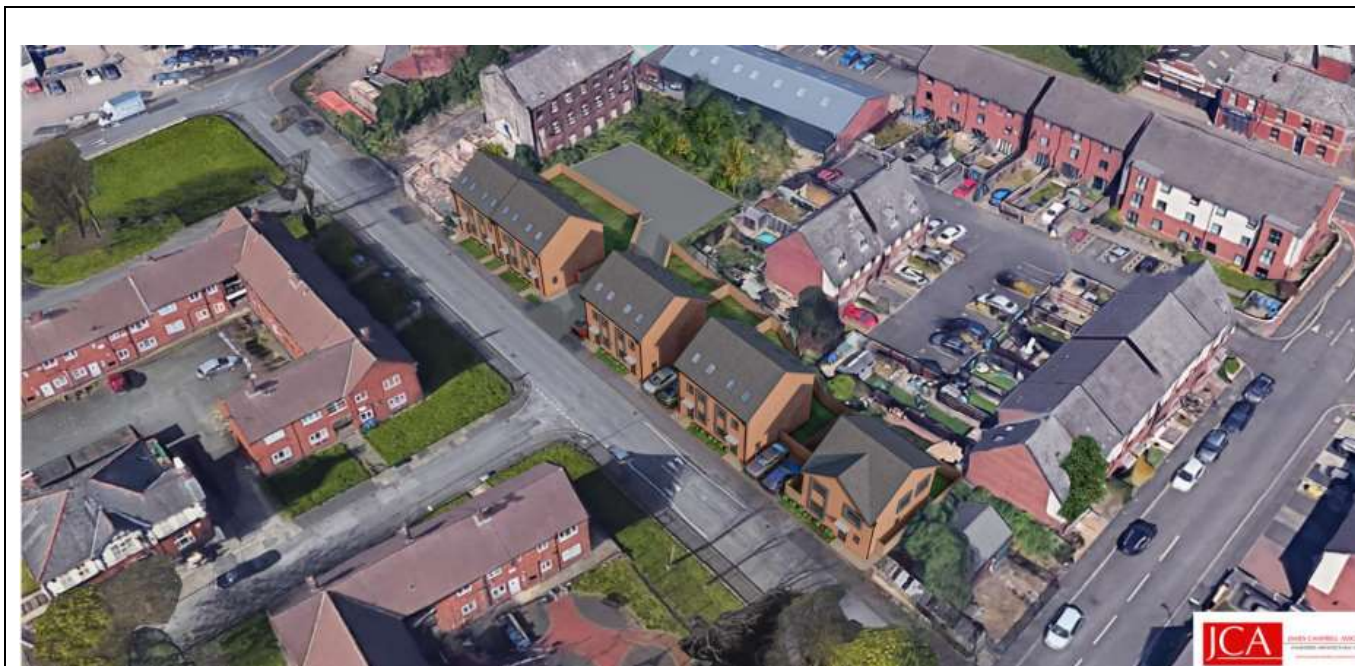
Figure: The ten characteristics of a well-designed place

Source: National Design Guide, 2021
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Reason(s) for Consultation

Building / Urban design

Scheme Image(s)



Source: Application submission

Assessment

This assessment has been made against:

National Guidance:

- The National Planning Policy Framework
- The ten characteristics of a well-designed place contained within the National Design Guide
- National Model Design Code
- Building for a Healthy Life design toolkit

Local Policy:

Rochdale Core Strategy policies:

- S03 – To improve design, image and quality of place
- P1 – Improving Image
- P2 – Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage
- P3 – Improving design of new development
- DMI (General Development Requirements)

Supplementary Planning Documents:

Oldham and Rochdale Urban Design Guide
Oldham and Rochdale Residential Design Guide

The Unitary Development Plan:

- G/BE/1 - Design Quality
- BE/2 - Design Criteria for New Development

Greater Manchester's Streets for All Design Guide

Emerging Planning Policy - Places for Everyone (PfE) joint development plan

SUMMARY

I am supportive in principle, of a development in this location. The layout however requires some refining, most likely with the omission of Plot 1. The elevations need to be revisited as they do not represent high quality design.

Scale

The scale in terms of height, is appropriate for the site and ties more closely with the existing dwellings to the east / south of the site. There will be a drop in levels compared to the dwellings to the west but these are built at a lower foundation point. The height of the proposed dwellings would not be contesting the former mill.

Layout

The form and layout of the development can be improved to strengthen the street frontage. Historically there was a frontage (albeit not houses) right up against the boundary of Schofield Street. This infill plot would very much benefit from reinstating a stronger perimeter block through the arrangement of terraced houses along this street.

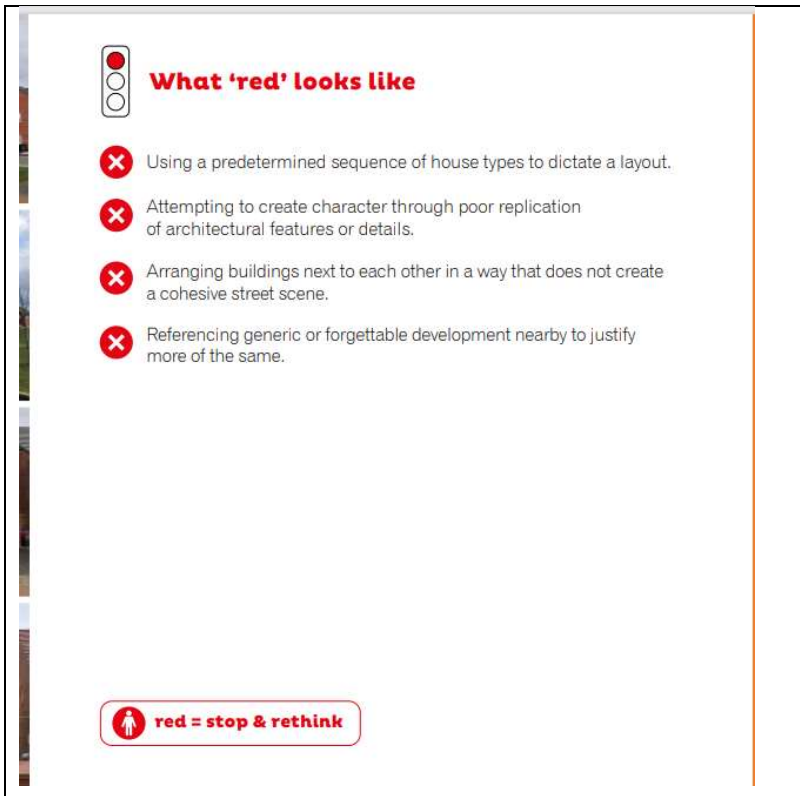
The site appears too congested to host 9 properties with the detached dwelling in the corner primarily being a cause for concern. The designer is not helped with an existing weak corner occupied by the substation and the constraints of the rear properties' back gardens. The detached dwelling also fails to promote an adequate amount of practical outdoor amenity space. This is accentuated with the consideration of the dwelling as a four bedroom property. Furthermore, the Building for a Healthy Life Toolkit advises against single aspect homes on street corners. I would therefore look to omit dwelling one and improve the relationship and arrangement of the other dwellings.

Where parking has been moved to the rear of the properties and thus removed the visibility of parked cars in front / side of properties; this is welcomed. There may be scope to enter the parking lot from where dwelling 9 currently sits, thus omitting the opening in the middle of the road; this may however prove challenging in terms of overlooking to the rear gardens of properties along Sundew Close.

Reconfiguration of the development could leave pieces of left over land between or to the side of buildings with no clear public or private function and this should be addressed.

Tenure / Parking

The transition of detached, to semi-detached, to a terraced row, along the street is fragmented and weakens the value of a street frontage. The site should be able to accommodate two terraced rows of four dwellings for example. Some further understanding of whom these dwellings are for could inform the parking requirements i.e. is there a case for 200% parking policy to be relaxed dependent on the user. Is there maybe scope for apartments to dwellings 2-5? The designer is advised to explore some alternative options to what has currently been presented.



Design

There are several poorly executed examples of development within the immediate context and this should not be the yardstick for any new development. Recent reforms to the national planning policy have emphasised the importance for design quality. The National Planning Policy Framework sets an expectation that good quality design will be approved while poor quality will be rejected. Good design should not just be for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.

Materials / Architectural detailing

There are very few examples of well-built architecture in the immediate area, but the designer can take some inspiration from the former mill and some selective examples along Manchester Street. The material palette put forward by the designer is not positive and will do little to improve the area. I can accept the upvc frames and concrete tiles if the brickwork could be improved; consider looking at a multi-stock blend reflective of the brick that could be found on the site historically.

The window pod surrounds in particular represents poor quality design, having a history of becoming outdated very quickly. Simply, I would omit completely. Similarly do not introduce render as a material. Better architectural detailing and articulation will improve the elevation design with longevity in mind. The designer may point towards a similar scheme at Gregge Street where window pods have been used. This housing development is another example of poor development which we do not want to see replicated for this site. The proposal at Schofield Street should be more cohesive in design with a better approach to fenestration details. The brickwork in this scheme however is more positive than the product put forward and potentially could work for the proposed site.



Window size and style

The primary elevations would benefit from relocating kitchens to the rear. This would allow a large window (to the lounge) along the front elevation adding more interest along the street. I would ask the designer to represent the window details properly in the elevations / CGIs as they currently are misleading.

View on approach to plot 9

Ensure the gable elevation is adequately addressed to show visual interest. Will there be any landscaping?

The dwelling should not impede a future development to come forward where the single storey part of the mill once stood. Generally I do not think the designer has overlooked the design of side elevations for dwellings that are visible from the street. Side elevations are blank and monotonous and these should be addressed.

Lack of visual interest / Poor architectural approach

The Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan requires developments to demonstrate good design by creating visual interest in areas or buildings lacking character. I would like to see the elevation design further developed so it can satisfactorily demonstrate high quality design.

In its current guise, the design is flat and lacking much character. The designer is encouraged to introduce architectural detailing to the scheme. This is prevalent in the surrounding built environment (see pictured) and whilst the designer is not expected to mimic historic architectural styles, such features can still be reinterpreted to the benefit of the scheme.

There are examples of good architectural detailing in the area and it is a missed opportunity for the designer not to have picked up on this. Drawing upon these elements would contribute to the 'higher quality design' requirement, intrinsically improving the character and distinctiveness of the area.

The current materiality shown for the elevations is unconvincing. There is no specific detail attributed to the brickwork and considering there are several elevations without much fenestration, it would be hoped that the designer may have gone into further detail regarding the materials.



Examples along Manchester Street and Bradshaw Street respectively



Other

- Biodiversity appears to be glanced over in the design and access statement with the site appearing quite different to previous years. The development would generally welcome a more concise strategy to soft landscaping.
- Has privacy / overlooking been fully addressed for neighbouring properties?
- A street elevation in context would be beneficial



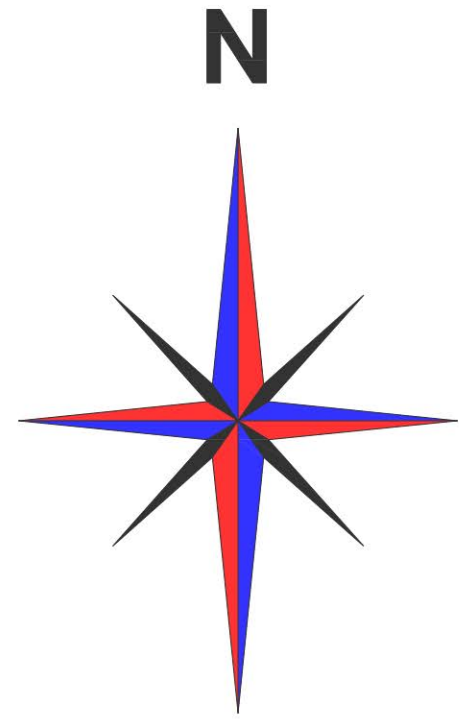
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Any discrepancies discovered or items found that were not visible at the time of the initial survey should be reported to James Campbell Associates Ltd for consultation with our client.

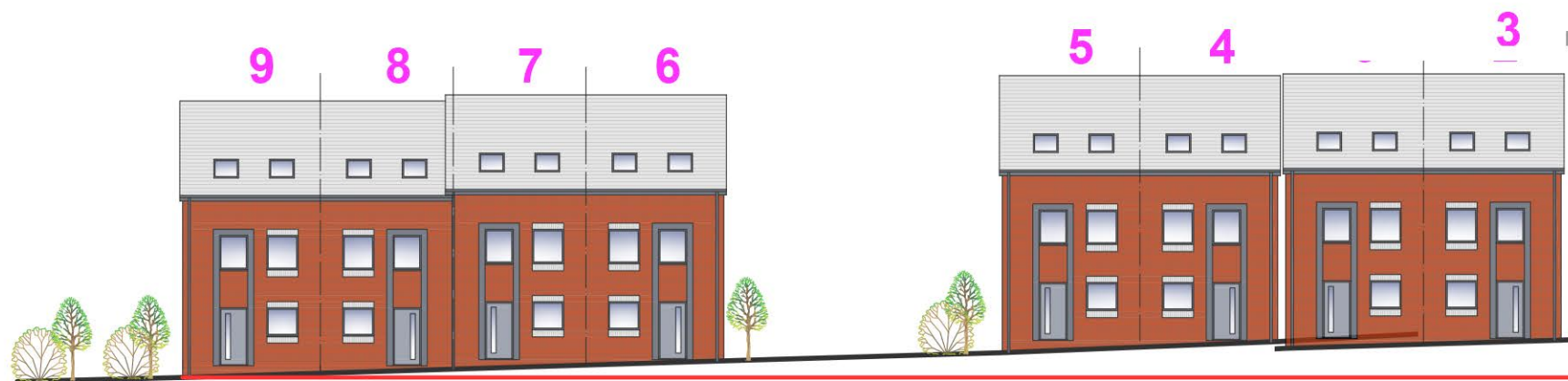
CONSTRUCTION NOTES:-



Provide view on approach. How the gable elevation going to be designed?

Ensure overlooking/ privacy has been addressed/ Allocate sufficient outdoor amenity space for residents

Opportunity to introduce further landscaping, screened parking



SCHOFIELD STREET ELEVATION
Scale 1:200

KEY

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| | Proposed Driveways, Private Footpaths & Parking | | Proposed Dropped Kerbs |
| | Proposed Access Road | | Proposed Garden / Private Landscape Areas |
| | Proposed Dwellings | | Proposed Communal / Open landscaping areas |
| | Patio Areas | | Proposed Bin Stores |

PROPOSED SITE PLAN

DRAWING TITLE		
PROPOSED SITE PLAN		
JCA JAMES CAMPBELL ASSOCIATES LTD CHARTERED ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES		
Campbell House 173 Rochdale Road Firgrove Rochdale OL16 3BN Tel: 01706 354888 Mob: 07817 623183 Email: admin@jamescampbellassociates.co.uk Web: www.jamescampbellassociates.co.uk		
PROJECT		
PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT		
LOCATION		
Land off Schofield Street Heywood		
DRAWN:-	Frank James Smith	DRAWING NUMBER:- 24.3378.SC1.1K
DATE:-	May 2024	
SCALE:-	1:250 @ A1	
ISSUE:-	K	