

URBAN DESIGN CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Design Officer	Azhar Kapadi
Date	22.09.25
Application Reference	25/00818/FUL
Address	Jalalia Mosque, Trafalgar Street, OL16 2EB
Proposal	Re-development of the existing building comprising the removal of the existing dome and minaret, the erection of a new first floor extension, the remodelling of the ground floor and alterations to fenestration on all elevations

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](#).

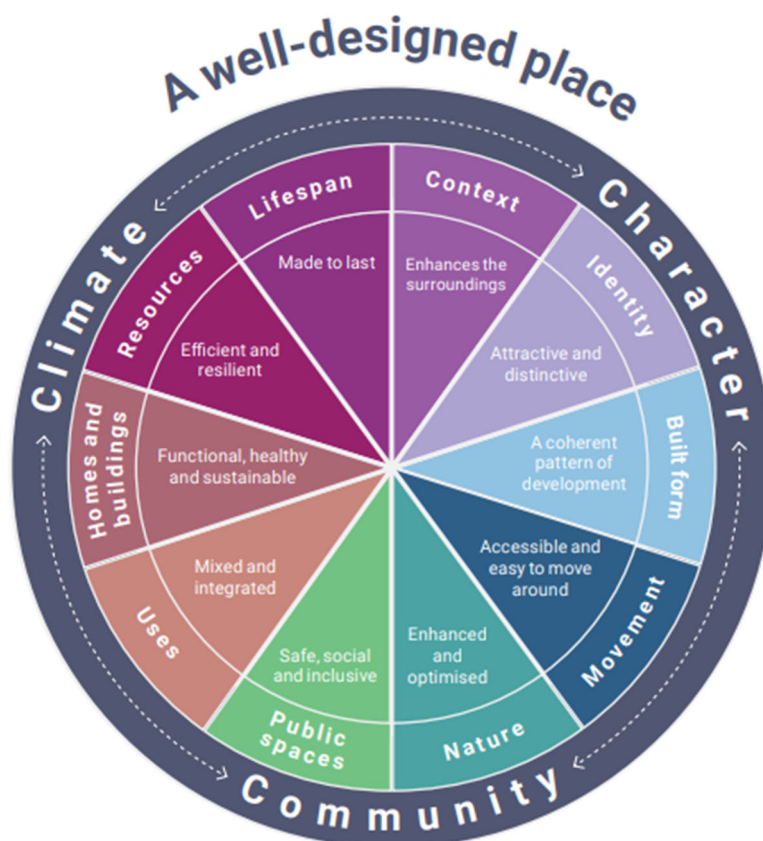


Figure: The ten characteristics of a well-designed place

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

Building / Urban design

Scheme Image(s)

Source: Application submission



Assessment

This application 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
- Greater Manchester Streets for All Design Guide

Local Policy

This list is not exhaustive of the local & national policies and Supplementary Planning Documents that are relevant to the consideration of the planning application.

- Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan
- Rochdale Core Strategy policies
- Supplementary Planning Documents:
 - Oldham and Rochdale Urban Design Guide
 - Oldham and Rochdale Residential Design Guide

SUMMARY

- Clarify if the building shell is new construction or a hybrid of new build and existing. The proposal description suggests a hybrid which raises several concerns on how the proposal has been presented.
- Assess the impact of overbearing impact, loss of outlook and overshadowing with a Daylight and Sunlight Assessment
- The proposed design of the masjid has not utilised the opportunity to markedly improve the design by addressing the piecemeal extensions that have come before it. This however can be improved with some simple changes.

Existing masjid

The facility has developed over time through a series of piecemeal extensions. This is demonstrated visually with a haphazard architectural language forming with the different extensions.

Pre-Application (September 2024)

The proposal put forward at this stage looked at an option of utilising the same footprint but with a much higher density. The scale and massing of this development was considered excessive, causing unacceptable harm to the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers by reason of overlooking, overshadowing and loss of outlook and privacy. The design of the masjid had not utilised the opportunity to significantly improve the existing building and promote high quality design. It was advised that the mosque car park plot should be explored as this was more likely to be accommodate the applicant's aspirations.



Extension

Whilst the application refers to the proposal as an 'extension', the reality is this will be a newly constructed building probably maintaining some of the internal spaces. This should be clarified with the applicant. **IF** this is not the case, we should be challenging the logistics of how this is possible. I would think the current foundations would not be able to support the envisaged development. The elevations would also in reality be very different to what has been shown. This would be significantly misrepresentative of the material transitions between existing and new materials. Lack of detail on the submitted drawings have not helped in this regard.

Scale of development

Development should not affect the amenity of residents or users through visual intrusion, overbearing impact, overshadowing or loss of privacy and development should mitigate against any impacts due to noise, dust, light and odour pollution.

To address this, the applicant has limited the number of windows at first floor level to obscure glazing. Whilst this may address the privacy element, there may remain a concern for overshadowing and overbearing impact to residents. The planning officer may want to test these concerns by requesting for a Daylight and Sunlight Assessment from the applicant. If these concerns are justified, I have no particular concern with the scale or height of the building although there are reservations the design has been neglected in order to address these primary concerns flagged at Pre-Application.

Design

The elevations are quite flat and uninteresting. There is an acceptance that the tight site creates constraints and limitations particularly to fenestration treatment facing the existing terraced rows. The existing masjid building is considered to be poor quality design but design policy references, where the local context is positive, new development should reflect local urban design characteristics. While the surrounding context includes elements of low design quality, this should not be used to justify further dilution of standards.

The architectural language across the elevations lacks consistency. On the side elevation, the use of arched windows with stone surrounds reflects elements of the existing building. However, the

introduction of new obscured windows at the upper level bears no visual or contextual relationship to this established style and appears arbitrary in placement and design, undermining the overall legibility of the façade.



A new building offers up the opportunity to repair the existing design which demonstrates poor design and the use of poor materials. As an entrance this is uninviting and does not help contribute to creating a welcoming entrance and strong street scene.



In the new proposal, the front entrance is particularly underwhelming, and this application provides an opportunity to improve the existing front elevation. This can be done by adding some depth to the entrance area to make it look less flat and uninviting. This concern was relayed at Pre-App. Generally, architectural detailing is unforthcoming and simple techniques such as brick detailing would help to

improve the elevation designs. Similarly, the Trafalgar Street elevation is more successful with the large arched window but lets itself down by allowing blank brick elevations to take prominence.

Roof and Minaret Design

Features such as the roof form appear 'heavy', and details of the 'chunky' overhang can certainly be improved. The roof is a dominant feature and acts an important source to draw natural light back into the building. In combination with the solar panels, this element contributes to a visually busy roofscape. A more integrated design approach such as the incorporation of a green roof would have been welcomed to soften the impact and enhance overall design quality.

The removal of the existing dome appears intended to shift visual emphasis toward the reinterpreted minaret. While this element has the potential to contribute positively to the scheme—subject to the careful selection of materials and detailing—the overall roof composition does not currently demonstrate the coherence or design quality expected of a high-quality proposal.

Drawing Information

The CGIs are welcomed as a guide to understanding the scheme. The design is unclear from the drawing elevations because of a lack of detail, absence of shadows to understand the different projections of the building. If the application is deemed acceptable, I would request an additional set of clearly annotated elevations without the existing outline overlaid.

As discussed earlier, clarify on the drawings which parts are existing and which parts are new, particularly in relation to the façade.