



Planning Statement

Ref: DA24072 - Church St Ind Estate

Site address: 66 - 68 Rochdale Rd, Middleton, Manchester M24 2PU

Date: May2025

Proposal: Creation of one duplex apartmnet and other façade changes.

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for redevelopment at 66–68 Rochdale Road. The application seeks approval for the conversion of Building B to a residential duplex apartment and external alterations to Building A to facilitate residential use. This application is intrinsically linked to a concurrent submission made under Class MA permitted development rights, for the conversion of the existing front Class E units to four residential apartments.

The cumulative outcome of these proposals is the creation of a sustainable, well-designed residential scheme comprising five new homes. This full application specifically relates to Apartment E (Building B) and the associated external façade works necessary to enable the residential use of Building A. A planning condition is anticipated to link the external alterations to the implementation of the permitted development conversion to ensure the design integrity of the overall scheme is secured.

The application is accompanied by the following supporting documentation:

- Existing and Proposed Plans and Elevations (Buildings A and B);
- Site Location and Block Plan;
- Proposed Landscaping Plan.

This statement provides an appraisal of the site, context, policy compliance, design and access rationale, and supporting considerations. It sets out a comprehensive justification for the proposed development in line with national and local planning policy.

2. Site Context

The application site comprises two buildings fronting and set behind Rochdale Road, a strategic corridor within the borough. The immediate area displays a transitional character, with light industrial, residential, and some commercial activity. The buildings currently serve



a limited commercial function and have become increasingly disconnected from the active frontage, being isolated from any coherent shopping or employment destination.

Building A has a distinctive pitched roof and residential-scale façade. While its form is not unattractive, it is underutilised in its current role. Building B is an ancillary block to the rear that previously served commercial operations, but it too has become redundant in terms of economic utility. The location is well served by public transport, with a bus stop nearby and safe pedestrian connectivity to schools, services, and green space. This underlines the site's strategic potential for housing-led regeneration.

The surrounding context includes:

- Established housing stock immediately opposite and adjacent to the site;
- A light industrial yard to the rear that forms part of the historic employment base;
- A strong linear building rhythm along the street, which the proposal respects through its retention and upgrade of the existing built form.

3. The Proposal

The proposed development seeks to deliver five high-quality new homes through:

- The full conversion of Building B into a family-oriented, 2-bedroom duplex (Apartment E);
- External elevation changes to Building A to support its permitted development conversion to four additional residential apartments;
- A coherent site strategy including landscaping, bin and cycle storage, access improvements, and a small number of parking bays.

The full residential mix (this application and the concurrent PD application) is as follows:

Apartment	Size (GIA)	Occupancy	NDSS Minimum	Compliance
A	61.8m ²	2B3P	61m ²	✓
B	50.9m ²	1B2P	50m ²	✓
C	42.4m ²	1B1P	39m ²	✓
D	74.1m ²	3B4P	74m ²	✓
E	63.3m ²	2B3P	61m ²	✓



The proposed unit sizes are compliant with the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS). Importantly, the scheme provides a balanced mix of dwelling types that will contribute meaningfully to local housing needs, particularly smaller households and young families.

This is not speculative or generic development. It responds specifically to the layout, rhythm, and scale of existing built form. The reuse of buildings reduces material waste, while the new amenity spaces and enhanced elevations contribute to a coherent urban improvement strategy.

4. Design and Access

Design considerations underpin every element of the proposal. The redevelopment strikes a careful balance between retaining the character of the original buildings and enhancing functionality, appearance, and spatial experience for new occupants. It has been informed by the Rochdale Urban Design Guide SPD and Residential Design Guide SPD.

Design Quality and Massing:

- Existing rooflines, building footprints and forms are retained to integrate seamlessly with the streetscape;
- Façade interventions are subtle and proportionate, including window additions, finishes, and boundary enhancements;
- Residential cues (e.g. window alignment, doors, soft landscaping) reinforce domestic character.

Amenity and Access:

- Entrances are well defined and accessible, including level thresholds and safe lighting;
- Garden and courtyard areas are directly accessible from ground-floor units;
- The internal layout of each apartment optimises usable space, daylight and privacy, particularly in relation to neighbouring properties and the street.

The result is a scheme that preserves local identity while delivering tangible design and functional benefits.



5. Planning Policy Context

The proposal directly supports the development goals and design aspirations of both national and local planning policy. Relevant national policy includes:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

- Paragraph 11: Presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- Paragraph 38: Emphasis on collaborative, proactive working between local authorities and applicants;
- Paragraphs 119–120: Support for development on previously developed land;
- Paragraph 130: Importance of good design, amenity, and local character.

Rochdale Core Strategy (2016):

- Policy C1 – Housing location: Supports residential development in sustainable locations;
- Policy C3 – Housing mix and type: Promotes high-quality design and a range of house types;
- Policy P3 – Design quality: Ensures development reflects local identity and promotes sense of place;
- Policy G6 & G7 – Green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancement;
- Policy DM1 – General development criteria: Considers integration, safety, character, and function.

The scheme also adheres to the Rochdale Residential Design Guide, Urban Design SPD, and Biodiversity and Development SPD, each of which places strong emphasis on integrating new development into the townscape while improving environmental performance and liveability. Together, the scheme represents a clear example of small-scale intensification that is both appropriate and beneficial to the local context.

6. Landscaping and Amenity

The transformation of this brownfield site from an entirely hard-surfaced commercial yard into a green, attractive and liveable residential courtyard is central to the planning and design merit of this proposal. Landscaping is not an afterthought but a core component of the layout, contributing to the visual, ecological and social value of the development.



Care has been taken to ensure that the external environment provides:

- Private outdoor space for ground-floor residents, secured by planting and boundary treatments to foster a sense of ownership and privacy;
- A communal central courtyard, offering a high-quality landscaped environment between the two buildings, including lawns, pathways, and small planting beds for amenity and passive recreation;
- Appropriate boundary treatments, including soft landscaping and screening to maintain privacy without enclosing the site in a visually harsh manner;
- Integrated bin and cycle storage, enclosed within discrete, accessible structures screened by planting or walls;
- Low-level and downlit external lighting, ensuring safety without contributing to light pollution.

The combined effect of these measures is the creation of an attractive and practical space that supports day-to-day domestic life and contributes to placemaking. The landscaping proposals reflect and exceed the expectations of Core Strategy Policies G6 and G7 and are consistent with the guidance of the Rochdale Residential Design Guide SPD.

7. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

The site currently has no baseline ecological value. It is fully hard-surfaced and offers no planting, green infrastructure or habitat. As such, the redevelopment offers a clear opportunity to deliver biodiversity net gain (BNG) through landscaping alone, without the need for formal offsetting or habitat banking.

In line with the Biodiversity and Development SPD (2017) and the Environment Act 2021, sites with no measurable existing habitat can demonstrate compliance with BNG requirements by:

- Providing new and diverse planting beds and garden spaces;
- Introducing soft landscaping into previously sealed environments;
- Supporting pollinator species through seasonal planting and flower selection;
- Incorporating features that support urban microclimates, reduce heat islands, and improve air quality.



The approach taken here is simple but effective: through good design and meaningful landscaping, the development will achieve an environmental uplift appropriate to its scale and character. This is fully in accordance with Core Strategy Policy G7 and national policy aims.

8. Highways, Access and Parking

The site lies on a strategic route with excellent access to public transport. The development has been designed to encourage active and sustainable modes of travel, while still accommodating limited car ownership. Access, servicing and circulation have been carefully considered.

Key components include:

- Direct access from Rochdale Road, ensuring visibility and ease of entry for residents and visitors;
- On-site provision of several parking bays, allocated sensibly within the curtilage to avoid over-dominance of the public realm;
- A secure, covered cycle store, accessible to all residents, providing a practical and policy-compliant alternative to car ownership;
- Defined pedestrian routes across the site with passive surveillance and soft lighting, enhancing security and usability;
- Refuse and recycling storage placed for convenient collection without obstructing pedestrian or vehicle movement.

The site benefits from a strong location in terms of accessibility, and the proposals are entirely in line with Core Strategy Policy T2 and Manual for Streets principles. The balance of parking provision and support for sustainable travel reflects the site's urban character and constraints.

9. Energy Efficiency and Sustainability

The project is committed to delivering energy-efficient, regulation-compliant homes that are comfortable, affordable to run, and sustainable over the long term. A fabric-first approach underpins the strategy, maximising insulation and energy performance through design.



The scheme will include:

- Full compliance with Part L of the Building Regulations, ensuring thermal efficiency and energy conservation;
- Double-glazed and thermally broken windows and doors, minimising heat loss and condensation risk;
- High levels of insulation to walls, floors, and roofs, reducing heating demand and improving year-round comfort;
- Orientation and glazing strategy that maximises daylight and supports passive solar gain;
- Efficient heating and ventilation systems, with potential for air-source technologies if feasible;
- Water-saving fittings and the use of energy-efficient lighting throughout.

These measures not only meet the Borough's objectives under Core Strategy Policy G1 but reflect broader climate objectives and residents' need for sustainable and affordable housing.

10. Suggested Planning Condition – Linkage to Prior Approval Conversion

In light of the dual-application approach and the interdependence of the permitted development rights and this full application, a condition is proposed to ensure coordination and implementation integrity:

“The external alterations to Building A hereby approved shall not be implemented unless and until the change of use of the ground floor premises from Class E to Class C3 residential use has been approved under Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), and that approval remains extant. Furthermore, the elevation works shall be carried out in full accordance with the approved plans and prior to the first occupation of any residential unit formed within Building A.”

Reason: To ensure that the physical works proposed are only carried out in support of a lawful residential conversion, and to maintain coherence in the design and delivery of the overall development.



11. Positive and Proactive Engagement

In line with Paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the applicant welcomes a positive and collaborative approach to the determination of this application. The paragraph states:

“Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.”

The applicant is committed to working closely with the Local Planning Authority to resolve any outstanding matters promptly and constructively. This application does not benefit from a free resubmission opportunity, and is therefore brought forward in the genuine spirit of cooperation and engagement.

The design and technical proposals have been formulated in anticipation of policy expectations and with a strong emphasis on sustainability, design quality and housing need. The applicant remains fully open to dialogue with planning officers to ensure a successful outcome that benefits both the community and the borough.

12. Conclusion

This planning application demonstrates a strong and proactive approach to sustainable development, adaptive reuse, and small-scale intensification. It presents a credible opportunity to:

- Re-use underutilised buildings for residential purposes;
- Deliver a high standard of design and place-making, sensitive to local character;
- Provide a varied housing offer meeting internal space standards;
- Enhance visual amenity, ecological value, and community integration;
- Meet sustainability, energy, and access objectives.

The proposal is proportionate, policy-aligned, and deliverable. With appropriate conditions, it will provide a lasting benefit to the local area and contribute positively to Rochdale’s housing and environmental goals. Planning permission is respectfully sought.