

URBAN DESIGN CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Design Officer	Azhar Kapadi
Date	20.11.25
Application Reference	25/01127/FUL
Address	Land At The Junction Of King Street And Long Street, Middleton, M24 6DN
Proposal	Erection of 1 No. two and a half storey block of 9 No. flats together with bicycle storage, bin storage area and associated boundary and landscaping works

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](#).

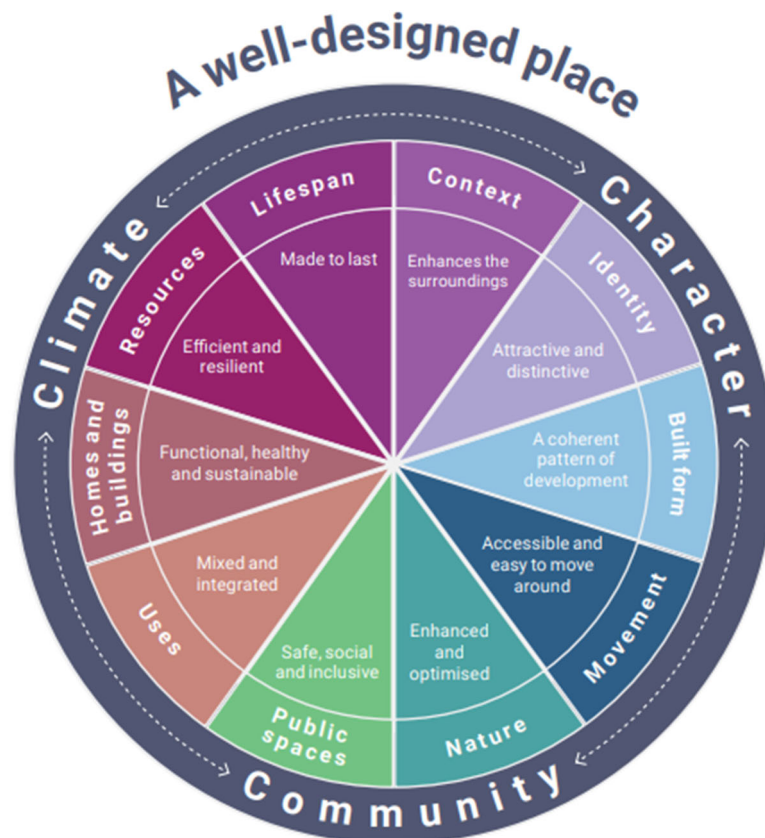


Figure: The ten characteristics of a well-designed place

Source: National Design Guide, 2021

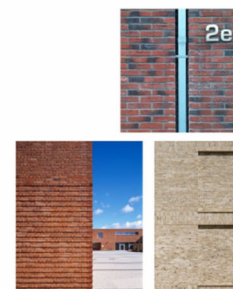
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Reason(s) for Consultation

Building / Urban design

Scheme Image(s)





Policy

Council Core Strategy

C3 requires a high standard of development and layout that produces attractive places.

Policy DMI Requires all development proposals to demonstrate that they are of a high-quality design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area.

Policy P3 acknowledges that good design will improve the image and attractiveness of the borough as a place to live, work and visit. This policy requires all new developments to adhere to high quality design and enhance the borough's identity and sense of place, by respecting context where it is positive..

Paragraph 135b of the **National Planning Policy** Framework states that planning decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and effective landscaping.

Rochdale Borough Unitary Development Plan BE/2:

Development proposals will be required to demonstrate good design by:

- a) Ensuring that they are compatible with or improve their surroundings by virtue of their scale, density, height, massing, layout, materials, architectural style and detail and means of enclosure

Design

The proposed built form responds to the street scene and is consistent with the character of the conservation area. Material choices; brickwork, acid-etched concrete and glazed tiles, demonstrate a clear design intent aimed at meeting the high standards expected in this context. In particular, the front façade offers an opportunity to raise local design quality by providing a much-needed frontage to the currently vacant infill corner plot. The selected palette and the way materials are composed create a coherent and contextual façade that avoids pastiche while respecting local context.

I have always felt the side and rear massing was substantial, but this was discussed and negotiated at pre-application stage with the planning officer. Historic mapping provides a sound basis for the view that earlier buildings on this site occupied a footprint broadly consistent with the current proposal.

Given the scale of the side elevation, careful treatment is required to minimise perceived bulk and to improve articulation. The applicant has responded positively to earlier design comments by incorporating brick infills at window openings, stepped brickwork at ground floor and recessed brick detailing around downpipes. These measures materially improve the scheme's capacity to meet design policy and to sit more comfortably within the street context.

Required detail and next steps

The successful delivery of this scheme will depend on the quality and clarity of detailed design. The agent should clarify or demonstrate the following details; the case officer will advise whether these should be provided at condition discharge stage or beforehand:

1. Confirm the depth of the stepped brickwork at the marked area of ground-floor rustication.
2. Confirm the depth and profile of recessed window infill.
3. Provide the intended detail for recessed/downpipe treatment.
4. Provide the proposed detail for hit-and-miss brick banding.

5. Produce and present a sufficiently large brick/sample panel on site that includes: a window-frame sample (can be a component), part of the acid-etched concrete, and a few courses demonstrating the rustication detail. For efficiency, discuss brick selection before building the sample panel to reduce abortive work. Be prepared to supply additional panels if materials are found unsuitable.

- 'Haywood Red' may be too uniform; a brick with greater texture and tonal variation is likely to be more successful. I am happy however to reserve judgement until samples are presented.
- Provide slate samples to be held up or positioned alongside the brick/sample panel for direct comparison.

Recommendations

White-framed windows are recommended. They will read softer on the elevation and sit more harmoniously with the existing street row.

This may have just been missed off the visual but ensure there is a suitable plinth to the front elevation at least. A good example to take inspiration from is the community centre across the road (see below).

