

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.
25/01014/FUL

CASE OFFICER
Nick Brookman

DATE
15th December 2025

DETERMINATION DATE (EXTENSION OF TIME)

19th December 2025

Address: Edgar Wood Academy, Heywood Old Road, Middleton, OL10 2QN

Proposal: Single storey extension to school to provide integrated SEND facility including formation of additional car park and new boundary fencing

PUBLICITY	Weekly list expired?	Y	Site Notice expired?	Y
	Neighbour letters expired?	Y	Press Notice expired?	N/A

DELEGATION	Significant departure from local plan?	N	Contrary to national policy?	N
	Applicant a Council Member or officer?	N	Contrary to previous decision?	N
	Major with 10 or more objections and recommending approval?	N	Called in or Planning Panel objection?	N

COMMENTS	Planning Panel comments received?	N
	Neighbour comments received?	N

EIA	Screening opinion completed and saved to Onbase?	N
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CONDITIONS	Pre-commencement conditions proposed?	Y
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	Y

RECOMMENDATION	GRANT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: RG

DATE: 18 December 2025

SITE

The application site relates to Edgar Wood Academy which is a recently constructed 11-16 year old secondary school established to provide 900 student places.

The school currently benefits from extensive grounds comprising of playing fields, yards, plaza's and open space, main school buildings and car parking areas.

The site is located to the southeast of Heywood Old Road (A6045) which also forms its access point. It is bound to the west by dwellings and their gardens along Heywood Old Road (nos 588-626) and the road itself. Whittle Brook is located to the north, and to the east are residential properties on the Langley Estate, with the wider grazing land bounded by properties on Wrigley Fold in this direction. A mature hedgerow (along Rochdale Way, a public right of way) lines the south-western boundary beyond which is Bowlee Playing Fields. Large clusters of woodland are located to the southeast.

PROPOSAL

The application proposes the construction of a single storey extension to the existing school to provide integrated SEND facilities including the formation of an additional car park and new boundary fencing.

The SEND facilities are operated by Redwood School within the Academy. The facilities are located/integrated at Edgar Wood Academy, operating from two classrooms within the main school building. This facility is a separate dedicated base for the Redwood School, but also enables use of shared space/facilities of the wider school, with access to dining provisions, specialist teaching facilities (cookery rooms) and sport facilities etc.

This arrangement has been possible due to the fact that the school is newly established and is yet to reach full capacity/occupancy levels, which is anticipated to be reached from September 2026, at which time the Redwood SEND school facility can no longer be accommodated within the current school accommodation.

This application will provide an extension to the west side of the existing sport building, with the proposed extension to be constructed to an area of existing hardstanding/plaza fronting the site. In addition, a small area of the adjacent school field will be utilised to provide additional onsite parking provision and the relocation of an existing cycle shelter.

The existing vehicular and pedestrian access and egress routes to the site will remain unchanged.

Alongside the new extension, the proposal is for the new Redwood School SEND provision and Edgar Wood inclusion provision to have direct access to external secure space to provide an inclusive and accessible environment to accommodate different sensory needs, social development and development of physical/motor skills.

The proposal will also form a new separate dedicated secure student entrance for the main student intake of Edgar Wood Academy, to relieve the pressure around the main school entrance which during peak times at the start and end of the school day becomes congested and presents safeguarding/security issues with school visitors, parents, deliveries and pupils all mixing in the confined space of the main entrance which become difficult to manage safely. This issue will only exacerbate as the school reaches maximum occupancy numbers.

In terms of design, the extension will provide approximately 495sqm of additional floor space with it's dimensions measures 31.5m in length and 15.5m in width. The overall height of the building will be 4m with a flat roof design to match that of the existing buildings across the site.

The extension will be constructed on the existing hardstanding and forecourt areas outside the existing sports hall.

The proposal reflects the design details of the recently constructed school buildings in both design and materials. Roof coverings will comprise a built up bitumen felt system concealed behind a parapet upstand detail. Externally the extension will be clad with light grey external rainscreen cladding panels (Trespa Meteon – Belgian Bluestone – NA16 Matt), and aluminium fascia, gutter and rainwater pipe detailing to be anthracite grey (RAL 7016), all principally to match the existing school. All windows and external doors are proposed to be aluminium or uPVC – colour anthracite grey (RAL 7016).

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan

JP-S1 Sustainable Development
JP-P5 Education, skills and knowledge

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

DM1 General development requirements

SO3 Improving Design, image and quality of place

P1 Improving image
P2 Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage
P3 Improving design of new development

SO4 Promoting a greener environment

G1 Tackling and adapting to climate change
G7 Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity
G8 Managing water resources and flood risk
G9 Reducing the impact of pollution, contamination and land instability

SO5 Improving accessibility and delivering sustainable transport

T2 Improving Accessibility

Saved Policies of Rochdale Unitary Development Plan:

D/10 Protected Open Land

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

22/00101/DOC - Submission of details to comply with condition 10 (noise assessment) on planning permission 20/01560/REM. Approved.

22/00100/DOC - Submission of details to comply with conditions 24 (noise verification) and 27 (boundaries treatment) on planning permission 20/00912/OUT. Approved.

21/01690/DOC - Submission of details to comply with condition 5 (drainage strategy) on planning permission 20/01560/REM. Approved.

21/01049/DOC - Submission of details to comply with conditions 22 (Electric Vehicle Charging Points) and 26 (External Lighting) on planning permission 20/00912/OUT. Approved.

21/00524/DOC - Submission of details to comply with condition 3 (Rochdale way improvements) on planning permission 20/00912/OUT. Approved.

21/00185/DOC - Submission of details to comply conditions 9 (Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation), 11 (Tree Protection Plan(s) (TPP) and an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS), 14 (Badger Sett Resurvey), 16 (Invasive Species Survey), 17 (Construction Management Plan), 18 (Biodiversity Mitigation), 19 (Site Investigation and Risk Assessment) and 21 (Ground and Floor Levels) of planning permission 20/00912/OUT. Approved.

20/01560/REM - Application for approval of reserved matters (including Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale) for a new secondary school development with associated parking, sports provision and landscaping pursuant to outline planning permission 20/00912/OUT. Approved subject to conditions.

20/01554/DOC - Submission of details to comply with conditions 6 (Access Road) and 15 (Ecological Survey) of planning permission 20/00912/OUT. Approved.

20/00912/FUL - Outline planning application for new secondary school development and associated parking, sports provision and landscaping (with details of access provided, and all other matters reserved). Approved subject to conditions.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways

No objection.

Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

No comments received.

United Utilities

No objection subject to condition.

Conservation Officer

No objection.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit

No objection subject to condition.

Schools Services

No objection.

REPRESENTATIONS

Owing to the location of the application site and the significant distance between the application site and any neighbouring property, letters were not issued to any neighbouring dwelling. However, one site notice was displayed adjacent to the application site on 30th October 2025 near to the school gates on a lamppost by Heywood Old Road.

ANALYSIS

Principle of development

The principle of the development and existing use of the site has been established through previous applications.

As referred to previously, this application is proposing an extension to the existing school buildings to accommodate the Redwood School and enable the facility to remain at the Edgar Wood site with a new purpose built SEND provision which will maintain the integration of Redwood School within Edgar Wood Academy and enable the continued access to the shared facilities of the wider school site.

The extension will also provide associated facilities to form an inclusion provision for Edgar Wood alongside the Redwood School SEND to support the wider specialist needs of the student cohort. Alongside the new extension, the proposal is for the new Redwood School SEND provision and Edgar Wood inclusion provision to have direct access to external secure space to provide an inclusive and accessible environment to accommodate different sensory needs, social development and development of physical/motor skills.

The development proposed under this application would evidently support the continued and growing education provision at the site. The NPPF clearly establishes the importance of education and sets out under paragraph 100 that great weight should be given to the need to create, expand or alter schools. With this in mind, it is considered that the proposal comprises development that is supported in principle.

Design and Visual Amenity

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that *“the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve”*. Paragraph 135 goes on to state that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping and are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

Additionally, paragraph 139 sets out that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.

The National Design Guide (NDG) states that “*The long-standing, fundamental principles for good design are that is it: fit for purpose; durable; and brings delight*”. The NDG advises that scale, appearance materiality and detailing of buildings are key components for well-designed places. The Building for a Healthy Life guidance document states that building forms and materials should be used to reflect local character.

The above considerations are largely reflected within Policies DM1 and P3 of the Council’s adopted Core Strategy which ultimately require development proposals to demonstrate high quality design.

The proposed extension by virtue of its scale, appearance, layout and massing is of a sympathetic and appropriate design that comfortably fits in with the existing built environment and design of the existing school building.

The extension will seamlessly provide a well-designed single storey extension to the host building that would remain subordinate to the primary school building and more importantly, in keeping with the character of the area.

The remodelling of the external areas to create a new car parking area and boundary fencing are insignificant in size and would appropriately fit in with the existing car parking layout. The existing cycle shelters will also be relocated. The proposed fencing would assimilate very well with the existing school boundary fencing.

Overall, the development proposes the use of matching materials which would ensure the development would assimilate well with the existing building and environment. Therefore, the proposal is acceptable in terms of design and appearance and it is consistent with adopted Rochdale Core Strategy Policies P3 and DM1 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Heritage

Birch Conservation Area is located north of the wider school site. The Conservation Officer was consulted on this application and they noted that the extension would be within the school complex and over 200m away from the Conservation Area. As a result of it’s height, position in the school and the distance of separation, the proposal would not materially impact the significance of the Conservation Area or it’s character and appearance. Accordingly, the Conservation Officer has no objections to the development proposed.

Therefore, subject to condition, the proposed development is acceptable and in accordance with Policy P2 of the Rochdale Core Strategy, PfE Policy JP-J2 and the NPPF.

Highways

Policy T2 of the CS requires development to comply with the Council’s car parking standards and policy DM1 requires that development provides satisfactory vehicular access with adequate parking, manoeuvring and servicing arrangements, taking into account the proposed use and location.

Policy JP-C8 of PfE requires new development to be located and designed to enable and encourage walking, cycling and public transport use to reduce the negative effects of car dependency and help deliver high quality, attractive, liveable and sustainable environments.

Paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

It is noted by Planning Officers that access to the proposed development will utilise the existing access point from Heywood Old Road. Planning Officers also note that the school is now in operational use and presently the SEND 'facility' within the school is essentially one dedicated classroom within the existing school. This application is for an extension to the existing school to provide 2 SEND classrooms for children in need and a whole new student entrance into the school (for all students) along with 2 other school classrooms.

However, traffic at this location is particularly contentious and the Council's Highways team receive regular complaints and enquiries. Highways requested the submission of a trip generation exercise to understand the impact of the proposed development on the wider highway network. This exercise was undertaken with the results submitted and provided to the Highway Team. In response to this exercise, Highways have commented and confirmed that it has been clearly demonstrated by the Trip Generation exercise that the school falls just below the threshold for any further Transport Study to be deemed necessary.

Highways Services have raised no objections and the development is considered acceptable in accordance with CS Policies T1 and T2, Policy JP-C8 of PfE and the NPPF.

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

Core Strategy Policy G7 requires that sites and features of biodiversity and geodiversity importance are given full and appropriate recognition and protection and that opportunities for enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity will be supported. It is expected that development proposals will protect and include existing biodiversity and take opportunities to promote biodiversity and create new habitats using landscaping and building and construction features wherever possible. CS Policy G7 requires that no development should result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity.

PfE Policy JP-G8 seeks to deliver a net enhancement of biodiversity resources through a collective of measures which are broadly aligned with the approach to BNG outlined within the Environment Act (2021), the NPPF and supporting guidance documents. The provisions of the Environment Act in respect of BNG are now a statutory requirement for planning applications and so the proposed development should achieve net gains for biodiversity via species enhancement as guided by the NPPF (paragraphs 187d and 192 b) to achieve demonstrable net gain for biodiversity.

When determining planning applications paragraph 193 of the NPPF sets out that if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused. Opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should also be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable.

As of 2nd April 2024, BNG of 10% for minor planning applications is mandatory for development in England under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

There are no statutory or non-statutory protected sites within the vicinity of the application site that are likely to be influenced by the proposed development.

GMEU were consulted on this application and they have confirmed that they are satisfied that the development will have no impact on wildlife.

However, they originally commented that the development will result in the loss of a small area of recently created amenity grassland which is proposed to be replaced with car park and soft landscaping. Therefore, despite the small scale of the development proposed, the development is not exempt from 10% BNG as over 25sqm of low value grassland is being lost.

Accordingly, the on-site proposals were amended and 10% net gain is now achieved on site. The plan of the proposed post intervention habitats is included within the revised BNG Assessment dated November 2025 on drawing reference ERAP Ltd. 2025-318 v2 dated 20/11/2025.

The on-site measures will be controlled through a habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP) condition.

Ecological Enhancements comprising the provision of one bird box on the new development has been recommended by the GMEU and this will also be secured by condition.

Accordingly, subject to conditions, the scheme is considered to be acceptable in accordance with Core Strategy Policy G6 and G7, PfE Policy JP-G8 and the NPPF

Amenity and Noise

Core Strategy Policy G9 sets out the Council's requirements approach to all forms of pollution including the risk of noise, as they relate to new development.

Paragraph 198 of the NPPF also states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account the likely effects of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development.

The use of the site as a school has already been established in principle. As demonstrated in the above satellite imagery, given the location of the application site and development proposed, the development would not directly overlook or create any undesirable impacts on neighbouring amenity or privacy. The existing school building is adequately located away from neighbouring development.

Accordingly, the development is not considered to impact on neighbouring amenity and the scheme is considered acceptable in accordance with CS Policies G9 and DM1 and the NPPF.

Drainage

Core Strategy Policy G8 requires that new development does not lead to any increased form of flooding locally or further downstream, does not impede natural water and flood risk management, is not detrimental to existing or potential flood storage areas, contributes where possible to alleviating existing flood risk and is itself well protected from flood risk and ensures prudent use of water resources.

Policy JP-S4 (Flood Risk and the Water Environment) of PfE expects developments to manage surface water runoff through sustainable drainage systems and development should achieve greenfield run-off rates unless it is demonstrated to be impracticable.

The site is located within Flood Zone 1, having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of flooding.

The discharge rates, drainage design and strategy have previously been agreed with the LLFA at part of the original construction of the school site. The location of the new extension is constructed on the existing hardstanding forecourt/plaza areas alongside the sport hall, which is currently drained via the exiting surface water drainage system, incorporating SuDs attenuation as per the original design previously approved. The new proposed extension building/roof areas will be drained via localised rainwater pipes/outlets and discharge to existing connection locally providing no impact/increased loading to the existing SUDs drainage system

Following initial comments from United Utilities, a revised drainage strategy was submitted and has been confirmed as acceptable subject to suitable control by condition.

Accordingly, subject to the inclusion of an appropriately worded condition, Officers consider that the development accords with Policy G8 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-S4 of PfE and the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant subject to the following conditions:

1. The development must be begun not later than three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following application plans and documents:

- ☐ Location Plan Drawing No BS.25-077-P-01
- ☐ Proposed Site Plan Drawing No BS.25-077-P-03
- ☐ Proposed Ground Floor Plan Drawing No BS.25-077-P-06
- ☐ Proposed Elevations Drawing No BS.25-077-P-07
- ☐ Typical Fencing Details Drawing No BS.25-077-P-08
- ☐ Proposed Drainage Plan Drawing No BS.25-077-P-09
- ☐ Design Access and Heritage Statement
- ☐ Drainage Statement
- ☐ Assessment of Biodiversity Net Gain by ERAP Reference 2025-318
- ☐ BNG Metric V2 Dated 20th November 2025

and the development shall be carried out in accordance with these details hereby approved unless otherwise required by the conditions below.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with the policies contained within the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. The drainage for the development hereby approved, shall be carried out in accordance with the principles set out in the submitted Foul & Surface Water Drainage Design Drawing EWA-CUR-00-XX-DR-C-92500, REV C02 dated 09.11.20. No surface water will be permitted to drain directly or indirectly into the public sewer. Prior to occupation of the proposed development, the drainage schemes shall be completed in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development and to prevent an undue increase in surface water run-off and to reduce the risk of flooding.

4. All proposed planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details shown on Drawing No 2025-318 v2 dated 20th November 2025 and titled UKHab Plan of Proposed Post-Intervention Habitats within the first planting and seeding seasons following the final occupation of the development. Any trees, plants or shrubs which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

Reason: To ensure that the site is satisfactorily landscaped having regard to its location and the nature of the proposed development and in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core, Policies JP-P1 and JP-G2 of the Places for Everyone Plan and the NPPF.

5. No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until a scheme of biodiversity enhancements has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such measures shall include the provision of bird boxes and the duly approved scheme shall be implemented in full prior to final occupation of the development.

Reason: In the interests of enhancing biodiversity and habitat provision within the site in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-G8 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

6. The development shall not commence until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (the HMMP), prepared in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan and including:

- (a) a non-technical summary;
- (b) the roles and responsibilities of the people or organisation(s) delivering the [HMMP];
- (c) the planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan;
- (d) the management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan for a period of 30 years from the completion of development; and

- (e) the monitoring methodology and frequency in respect of the created or enhanced habitat to be submitted to the local planning authority,

has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of maintaining and managing the proposed biodiversity and habitat provision within the site in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.