

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
24/01204/FUL	Nick Brookman	30 th January 2026

DETERMINATION DATE (EXTENSION OF TIME)

4th February 2026

Address: Land adjacent to substation on Alkington Hall Road North, Middleton, Manchester, M24 1SZ

Proposal: Erection of one detached dwelling with associated car parking and landscaping

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?	N/A
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CONDITIONS	Pre-commencement conditions proposed?	Y
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	Y

RECOMMENDATION	Approve subject to conditions
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: RG

DATE: 4 February 2026

SITE

The site is located within the Defined Urban Boundary as set out under Policy (G/D/1) of the UDP and it is located within Flood Zone 1 meaning the site has a low probability of flooding from rivers and the sea.

The application site is located approximately 0.6km to the south of Middleton Town Centre and is in close proximity to public transport links available on Manchester New Road.

The site relates to a small irregular shaped parcel of vacant land to the northern side of Alkrington Hall Road North. Currently the site is an undeveloped piece of land scattered with vegetation.

Initially the access road when accessed from the east via Manchester New Road is predominantly hedge lined along the northern edge with most residential dwellings located off its southern side. Residential properties are located on the northern side beyond the application site to the west.

An Electricity North West substation bounds the site to the west with No 188 Manchester New Road and No 24 West Crescent bounding the rear and north of the application site.

PROPOSAL

The planning application proposes the erection of a single detached one bedroom bungalow with associated landscaping and parking.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

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

Local

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

DM1 General development requirements

SO2 Creating successful and healthy communities

- C1 Delivering the right amount of housing in the right places
- C3 Delivering the right type of housing

SO3 Improving Design, image and quality of place

- P1 Improving image
- P3 Improving design of new development

SO4 Promoting a greener environment

- G1 Tackling and adapting to climate change
- G2 Energy and new development
- 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

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

Supplementary Planning Guidance note 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' (June 2016).

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE)

The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan was adopted and became part of the statutory development plan for each of the 9 authorities covered by the plan on 21st March 2024. The following policies are relevant:

JP-S1	Sustainable Development
JP-S4	Flood Risk and the Water Environment
JP-H1	Scale, Distribution and Phasing of New Housing Development
JP-H3	Type, Size and Design and New Housing
JP-H4	Density of New Housing
JP-P1	Sustainable Places
JP-C6	Walking and Cycling
JP-C8	Transport Requirements of New Development

RELEVANT SITE AND NEIGHBOURING HISTORY

11/D54774 Erection of a detached garage including the installation of fencing and gates reaching a maximum height of 1.8 metres to the site perimeter - Withdrawn October 2011

The site has also been subject to pre-application advice sought on a residential development of the site.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways and Engineering

No objection subject to condition.

Environmental Health (Noise)

No objection subject to condition.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU)

No objection subject to condition.

United Utilities

No comment to make.

Land Contamination

No objection subject to condition.

Tree Officer

No comments received.

The Coal Authority

No objection subject to condition.

Electricity North West

No objection. Standard advice provided.

REPRESENTATIONS

Letters of notification were sent to the occupiers of surrounding buildings on the 19th December 2025. In addition, 1 site notice was displayed adjacent to the application site on 5th January 2026.

10 objections were received which raised the following concerns:

- Existing fence would be damaged.
- Foundations would damage existing tree roots.
- Wildlife would be negatively impacted.
- Mental Health would be affected.
- Existing access road in poor condition and not designed to accommodate extra vehicle movements.
- There is a lack of suitable parking provision.
- Proposed development is unsustainable.
- The development would cause refuse collection issues.
- Development is extremely close to existing electricity substation.
- The existing road is susceptible to flooding.
- The rear of the proposed development would be overlooked.
- The existing access road would be damaged by the construction traffic.
- Submitted plans are not fully illustrative of what is actually on the ground.
- Proposed development is too large for the plot.
- Dwelling does not provide an adequate level of amenity.
- Development will affect the street scene.
- Development will be overshadowed by existing development and therefore have a lack of light.
- Concerns on the scale and massing of the development.
- Development would sit forward of the existing building line,
- No provision for visitor parking.
- The Proposed Development will create a specific risk to pedestrians and cyclists who use Alkington Hall Road North to access local green amenities, with the parking space of the Proposed Development located in a blind spot to those entering from the junction with Manchester New Road.

- The Proposed Development and associated plans fail to address the proposed levels of the site in relation to neighbouring plots and Alkrington Hall Road North, resulting in a complete lack of specificity in respect the impact of the Proposed Development on its surroundings or any grading or levelling works required.
- The Proposed Development and associated plans fail to address the risk of increased surface water flood risk to the local area. This risk would be increased due to the loss of scrub/topographical features on the Land that currently act as a natural drainage function for excess rainwater or other water run-off.
- Construction vehicles will cause a highway hazard.
- Utilities cables or pipes for gas, sewage, and electricity are also located under Alkrington Hall Road North, in close proximity to the Land, emphasised by the close proximity of the electrical substation. The expectation that large and construction-related vehicles will be manoeuvring directly over those utility connections creates a risk that connections of residents may be adversely affected.
- The Site Plan supplied with the Application does not, with reference to the Rochdale Borough Council Local List, show "*buildings, roads and footpaths on land adjoining the site; the position of trees on the site and adjacent land; the extent and type of any hard surfacing; any boundary treatments where proposed.*"
- Overdevelopment of the land.

ANALYSIS

Principle of Development

The application seeks permission for the erection of a one bedroom single storey detached dwelling. The site lies within the defined Urban Area where Policy G/D/1 of the UDP seeks to concentrate development.

Paragraph 124 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that "*Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions*". Paragraph 125 of the NPPF advises under sub paragraph (d) that "*Planning policies and decisions should promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing..*".

PfE Policy JP-H1 sets out the requirements for Rochdale to deliver 10,472 dwellings over the plan period to 2039, at an average of 616 dwellings per year, increasing periodically, with the delivery target at 568 dwellings over 2022-25. This superseded the targets previously establishing with CS Policy C1.

CS Policy C1 is focused on ensuring that new housing is provided on sites that are sustainable with good access to local services, facilities, green infrastructure, shops, jobs, schools and public transport. CS Policy C1 also sets out that, inter alia, in the south of Rochdale Borough, the opportunity to provide new housing in sustainable locations will be maximised. Housing should be located in key economic growth areas and/or within town centres.

In accordance with CS Policy C1, the Council will consider the sustainable development of greenfield sites within the urban area where it is demonstrated that:

- a. The development would have limited adverse impact on green infrastructure or amenity value in and around the site; and
- b. Green infrastructure is wherever possible, incorporated into the scheme.

This requirement links in with CS Policy G6 which requires new development to incorporate green infrastructure, sustainable urban drainage, increase the number of street trees and developing new green spaces. This point is elaborated on further into this assessment but principally, the Council will expect all development proposals and other proposals affecting green infrastructure to avoid the loss of existing urban green space or features such as trees unless suitable alternative provision is made, it has limited value, and its development or change of use would help meet other sustainability or local regeneration objectives.

CS Policy C3 sets out that the Council will deliver the right types of homes, well designed and built to appropriate densities to meet the overall needs and aspirations of the borough. This will be done via several measures, and includes but is not limited to, ensuring that new development provides housing types that take account of local needs and aspirations requiring a high standard of design and layout that produces attractive places and takes account of energy efficiency and climate change.

Paragraph 70 of the NPPF sets out that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly.

Further to those relevant policies as identified in the Rochdale Core Strategy, relevant policies in Places for Everyone (PfE) have been identified. PfE Policy JP-S 1 sets out that development should seek to maximise economic, social and environmental benefits. PfE Policy JP-H2 states that there should be a significant increase in the supply of new housing, including, specifically, the supply of low-cost market housing. Furthermore, as set out in PfE Policy JP-H4, new housing should be delivered at a density appropriate for the location and taking into account the site's accessibility and regard should be had to the minimum densities set out within this Policy.

Sustainability of the site's 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. This ties in with the aims of CS Policy C1 which is focused on ensuring that development is delivered in sustainable locations.

In terms of accessibility to local services and amenities, the site is located 0.4 miles from Middleton Town Centre which provides amenities and daily services as well as very frequent public transport links to access the wider geographical area.

In addition, public transport links are provided via the bus stop to the north at West Crescent and to the south just beyond Alkrington Green. Services at these stops provide access to Bury, Rochdale, Middleton. These bus stops are 0.1km away from the proposed application site.

It is therefore considered that the proposal would lead to the provision of five residential dwellings in a sustainable location and this development is acceptable in principle.

Conclusion

In this instance, it is considered that the proposal would lead to the provision of a single detached dwelling in a sustainable location. The proposed dwelling created would assist the Borough in meeting its housing requirements with the proposed development being built to an appropriate density.

Accordingly, subject to addressing all other material planning considerations the proposal is acceptable in principle and in accordance with adopted Rochdale Core Strategy Policies, C1, C3 and Places for Everyone Policies JP-S 1, JP-H2 and JP-H4, as well as the National Planning Policy Framework.

Design and Appearance

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.

CS Policy P1 sets out that high quality design will be required in all new developments, requiring that under-used land and buildings are re-used and creating people-friendly and safe environments. CS Policy C3 requires new development to adhere to high standards of design, respecting context (scale, density, massing, height, layout) and contributing positively to the townscape. CS Policy DM1 states that all development proposals should be of a high quality design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area.

Owing to the benefit of existing boundary treatments and the layout and orientation of the application site in the existing environment, the proposed dwelling would not appear prominent or highly visible in this location as it would be relatively screened from view on the approach from Manchester New Road in the east or from when travelling along Alkrington Hall Road North in a west to east direction. Taking this into account along with the massing and scale of the proposed development, the proposed dwelling when viewed against neighbouring premises and the overall character of the area, would not detrimentally impact on the street scene. The proposed arrangement would not significantly distort or disrupt the street scene to an extent that would be harmful to the built environment.

The proposed development would be forward of the existing building line with regards to the existing development on Alkrington Hall Road North to the west, however it is afforded

a degree of separation by the intervening substation site and is not considered to be located in a way which is harmful to the amenity of No 2A Alkrington Hall Road North, which itself breaks up the building line through its siting further back from the street than the properties beyond to the west.

At pre-application stage, a 2-bedroom dwelling was proposed and it was considered that its massing and scale for the small plot was excessive. Through this application the proposals have been amended with a reduction in scale and the proposal of a one bedroom dwelling. Whilst there is no doubt that the application site is small, the proposed building is of a modest scale which is now considered to be proportionate to the site. The scale and massing of buildings within the vicinity vary with no uniform massing or typology.

In terms of materials, the proposed development is to be constructed of red brick with stone cills and lintels, grey imitation slate roof tiles, and black upvc doors, windows and soffits and fascias. These materials are considered appropriate for the proposed development in this location.

The proposed site layout identifies front and rear landscaped garden areas. Other than dimensions and proposed locations as shown on the proposed block and site plan, the design of the proposed boundary treatment details has not been fully provided with the application and for that reason boundary treatment plans / specifications will be secured by condition.

Whilst the garden spaces are not large, they are appropriate for everyday amenity for a one-bedroom dwelling, particularly having regard to the wider site context which provided immediate access to attractive green spaces with recreational routes.

Given the small size of the plot, it is considered prudent and necessary to remove householder permitted development rights. This is considered reasonable to prevent undue harm to the amenity of all future occupiers and in the interest of visual amenity and in accordance with Policies P3 and DM1 adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and Policy JP-P1 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

It is noted that an objection was submitted by a member of the public that made specific reference to the fact that a topographical survey has not been submitted with the application and therefore it isn't clear at what height the development would be constructed in relation to the surrounding land levels. It is not considered that the site proposals would require significant groundworks and it is considered appropriate to control this through a suitably worded planning condition.

Therefore, subject to conditions, the proposal is acceptable in terms of design and appearance and consistent with adopted Rochdale Core Strategy policies P1, C3 and DM1 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

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 acknowledged by Planning Officers that the site access is tight with limited visibility and ability to manoeuvre vehicles easily. However, highways have commented in that they would expect very low speeds of traffic in this location and that the creation of an access would remove hedgerows that currently restrict visibility. The arrangement is also considered to be consistent with other existing properties on the street.

Highways have commented on the proposed parking bay being insufficient in size to allow for operational space around the vehicle but they have not objected to the fact that the space is sufficient in size to accommodate its intended purpose as an off-road parking area.

Overall, the development is not considered to have an adverse impact on highway safety and would not generate a level of additional traffic which would have a detrimental impact on the safe and efficient operation of the immediate local highway network, or strategic routes. Highways Services have raised no objections subject to a condition requiring the submission of a dilapidation survey and the development is considered acceptable in accordance with CS Policies T2, Policy JP-C8 of PfE 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 application is not accompanied by a Drainage Strategy Report but the application is accompanied by an indicative drainage plan. United Utilities were consulted on this application and they advised that they had no comment to make on this application.

The aim of any development is to discharge surface water run off as high up the hierarchy of drainage options as reasonably practical. In the absence of any drainage plan, it is considered by Officers that a Drainage Strategy and Drainage Plan demonstrating how surface and foul water would be disposed should be secured by condition.

This same strategy should also note that where SUDs are proposed as part of the development, consideration will need to be given to the implications of this in relation to the stability and public safety risks posed by coal mining legacy (which is elaborated on in more detail further into this report). The applicant should seek their own advice from a technically competent person to ensure that a proper assessment has been made of the

potential interaction between hydrology, the proposed drainage system and ground stability, including the implications this may have for any mine workings which may be present beneath the site.

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.

Occupier and Neighbour Amenity

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states planning decisions should create places which are 'safe, inclusive, and accessible, promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers'. Policy G9 of the Rochdale CS states all development is required to 'not have impacts that lead to an unacceptable increase in air, water, noise, light or other pollution.'

Neighbour amenity

The Council's Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development SPD refers to Space Standards at Section 4.1, and states the following:

'The following minimum space standards will be applied to all new residential developments and developments which affect existing residential properties:

- (i) 21m between directly facing principal windows of habitable rooms, at an upper floor level AND 10.5m between a principal window at an upper floor level and a directly facing boundary of the curtilage (Figure 2);*
- (ii) 14m between a principal window and any directly facing two storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room (Figure 3);*
- (iii) 10m between a principal window and any directly facing single storey elevation which does not contain a principal window to a habitable room (Figure 4).'*

Section 4.3 states exceptions to these minimum standards are acceptable in some circumstances and applications are considered on their own merits.

Significant concerns were raised at pre-application stage as No 1A Dene Drive had direct views into habitable room windows of the proposed dwelling. Given the elevated position of the north facing windows at first floor level at 1A Dene Drive the proposals were considered unacceptable and detrimental to the privacy of any future occupier.

Now, the proposed development before the LPA has been amended since pre-application stage and all habitable room windows have been relocated to the rear of the property. Accordingly, given the re-design and internal layout of the proposed development, the proposed separation and space standards here are acceptable between No 1A Dene Drive. In addition, No 188 Manchester New Road and No 24 West Crescent bounding the rear and north of the application site are also located over 21m away from the proposed development in compliance with the above distances.

In terms of loss of light or impacts of an overbearing nature for neighbouring development, the proposed development would not generate an overbearing impact on such buildings or their associated outdoor amenity space.

Occupier Amenity

In terms of occupier amenity, the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) is a technical standards document produced by the Government to ensure internal space within new dwellings is sufficient for future occupiers. Additionally, in accordance with PfE Policy JP-H3 (Type, Size and Design of New Housing), it is a requirement for all new dwellings to comply with the nationally described space standards and be built to the accessible and adaptable standard in Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations unless specific site conditions make this impracticable. These standards can be found here and any future development must adhere to the space standards: [Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/technical-housing-standards)

On assessment of the proposed floor plans, the proposed development does meet NDSS. This is also confirmed by measuring the dimensions on the submitted proposed floor plans which amount to the minimum 50sqm required for a 1 bedroom 2 person dwelling.

The minimum double bedroom requirements are also met.

Outdoor Space

With regards to outdoor amenity space for future occupiers, this is defined within the Council's Residential Development SPD residential amenity as; *'The benefit enjoyed from physical external space which is part of the private home. The level of enjoyment is dependent on a number of factors, including location, size, orientation, sounds, noise, accessibility and enclosure, and general quality of space.'*

Under paragraph 7.33 of PfE, the provision of appropriate outdoor amenity space is defined as being *'vital in delivering high quality homes that support good health'*.

In addition, the reasonable needs of occupiers would need to be met and these needs are considered to cover both functional and recreational requirements proportionate to the size of the household, taking into account the surrounding context.

As previously mentioned, there is no doubt that the application site is small in contrast to neighbouring plots, however, on reflection of the proposed layout, the proposed residential garden areas surrounding the front and rear of the proposed dwelling are acceptable and would provide an appropriate level of outdoor amenity space for the proposed dwelling which is proportionate for a one bedroom dwelling. In addition, due to the sites highly sustainable location there are ample opportunities to access other outdoor public amenity spaces within very close proximity to the site and further afield.

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

Noise and Pollution

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 NPPG states that local planning authorities' decision taking should take account of the acoustic environment and in doing so consider: whether or not a significant adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur; whether or not an adverse effect is occurring or likely to occur; and whether or not a good standard of amenity can be achieved.

Paragraph 135 also seeks to ensure that planning decisions create places which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. Policies DM1 and G9 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy seek to ensure that new development is compatible with surrounding land uses, both in terms of its impact upon those uses and the impact of the surrounding land uses upon the amenities of future residents / users, also requiring that development does not have impacts that lead to an unacceptable increase in air, water, noise, light or other pollution.

Environmental Health were consulted on this application and they requested that a Noise Impact Assessment should be submitted to identify any mitigation measures required to ensure that the proposal does not affect nearby properties and to ensure their amenity is not affected adversely by any noise. However, Planning Officers disagree with this view as the proposed scheme by its very nature would not cause any significant impacts in terms of noise and disturbance. It is a residential development in a residential environment which would not generate any unusual levels of noise that would go above and beyond existing levels of noise within the immediate environment.

Environmental Health have also requested that construction working hours should be restricted by planning condition. However, Planning Officers recognise that such measures (such as statutory noise nuisances) can be controlled and can be adequately addressed under separate legislation should such matters or issues arise in the future.

Accordingly, as proposed the scheme would be considered acceptable in terms of amenity in accordance with Policy G9 and DM1 and the Council's Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development SPD.

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Ecology

The GMEU were consulted on this application and they have confirmed that the main considerations for this application are bats, nesting birds and other general fauna.

A Ground level Trees Assessment (Verity Webster – September 2025) has been submitted with this application. A full inspection of the trees found no potential roost features. GMEU have no reason to question the finding of the report. The Local Records Centre holds few records of foraging or roosting bats in the area. Having assessed the work planned, there is negligible potential for the works to disturb roosting bats and no further surveys are required.

Inevitably, there does seem to be some foliage that will need to be removed and this foliage may support nesting birds. All British birds nests and eggs (with certain limited exceptions) are protected by Section 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Owing to the benefit of a site visit on 5th January 2026 it appeared as though the majority of this foliage had already been removed unless this was naturally degraded given the time of year. Nevertheless, a condition will be secured to this permission to ensure that no tree or shrub clearance shall occur between March – August unless a detailed bird nest survey has first established that no active bird nests are present.

The applicant's ecologist felt that, without avoidance measures, the development had the potential to harm badger, amphibians, reptiles and hedgehog. Sections 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3

(Pages 27 & 28) of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) lays out reasonable avoidance measures for these species. The applicant is reminded and signposted to pay attention and adhere to these measures.

The development lies less than 50 metres from Alkrington Woods Local Nature Reserve and SBI. For this reason a condition is attached to this permission to protect these designations from site clearances, spillages, dust and debris.

Trees

The NPPF recognises the important contribution of trees to the character and quality of urban environments, and their role in mitigating and adapting to climate change. Policy JP-G2 of the adopted PfE identifies trees and woodland as vital elements of the green infrastructure network and key features of urban green spaces, which Policy JP-G8 seek to protect and enhance through conserving and managing existing trees of heritage and/or aesthetic value. Policy G6 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy sets out provision for enhancing green infrastructure and requires regard to local landscape character and contribute to its conservation or enhancement. Developments should avoid the loss of existing urban greenspace or features e.g. trees unless suitable alternative provision is made, it has limited value and its development or change of use will help meet other sustainability or local regeneration objectives.

CS Policy G6 requires a replacement planting ratio of at least 2:1 and Policy G7 requires developments to protect existing biodiversity including trees and vegetation.

The application is accompanied by a Tree Appraisal which confirms that there is no requirement to remove any trees from the application site to facilitate the proposed development.

There will however be a requirement to prune tree T6 and recommendations for this are included within the Arboricultural Method Statement contained within the Tree Appraisal.

It is acknowledged that there will be a requirement to excavate building footings which will slightly overlap the calculated root protection area (RPA) of tree T6, (see Arboricultural Impact Assessment drawing RTS/29102025/AIA 002). The excavation overlap, however, is calculated to be a mere 2 square metres. This minor overlap of the RPA would amount to an approximate 9% overlap of the total RPA. Due to the very minimal overlap together with the fact that all the remaining sections of the RPA and contiguous areas will remain undisturbed, the potential loss or damage to roots is considered insignificant and would not be expected to cause any significant harm to the long-term health and viability of the tree.

Accordingly, subject to condition, the proposed development is considered to acceptable and would comply with G6 and G7 of the Core Strategy, PfE and the NPPF.

BNG

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 192b) 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 net gain.

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. In this instance the applicant has claimed the development to be self-build which falls within the exemptions listed under The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024.

However, in order to meet the self-build exemption, the development must meet the definition provided in the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act (2015) in that such is the case where an individual, an association of individuals, or persons working with or for individuals or associations of individuals, build or complete houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals. Planning Officers and the GMEU are satisfied in this instance that the development meets this definition.

The GMEU have however confirmed that they would expect to see the scheme include biodiversity enhancement measures. Notwithstanding the above position on mandatory BNG, the provisions of the NPPF and PfE Policy JP-G8 in respect of providing a net gain to biodiversity would still apply to the proposed development.

In this regard, whilst soft landscaping in the form of grass is proposed, Planning Officers consider this to be insufficient in mitigating for the level of biodiversity lost through clearing this vegetated, albeit unmanaged site to facilitate the proposed development. It is however recognised that the existing vegetation on site is evidently of limited value.

Nevertheless, a soft landscaping scheme will be secured by condition to ensure the proposed development incorporates biodiversity enhancements. The same scheme should also provide for bat bricks, bird boxes and hedge hog friendly fencing.

Ecology and BNG Summary

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

Land Contamination and Coal Mining Risk

Core Strategy Policy G9 requires that any risks arising from contaminated land are identified and that any appropriate actions are taken.

The Council's Land Contamination Officer was consulted on this application and they have commented that historically, the site was open space until the surrounding houses were built. Originally, this land was part of the electricity sub-station before it seems to

have been separated off as a separate plot between 2004 and 2007. Because of this, the land may have been impacted by the development of the old sub-station. Due to the sensitivity of potential receptors and the historic on-site and off-site land use, they have requested a condition requiring the applicant to provide a Phase 1 Preliminary Risk Assessment prior to the commencement of any development.

In addition, the application site falls within the defined Development High Risk Areas with regards to mining areas and the Coal Authority has a duty to respond to planning applications which impact on such areas.

The application is accompanied by a Coal Mining Risk Assessment which has been reviewed by the Coal Authority. The Coal Authority concurs with the recommendations of the Coal Mining Risk Assessment Report in that coal mining legacy potentially poses a risk to the proposed development and that intrusive site investigation works should be undertaken prior to development in order to establish the exact situation regarding coal mining legacy issues on the site. This work will be secured by condition.

Therefore, subject to condition, the proposed development is acceptable with regards to CS Policy G9 and the Framework.

Energy and Sustainability

Core Strategy Policy G1 sets out measures to address climate change and emissions, whilst Policy G2 requires that new development adhere to the energy hierarchy.

Policy JP-S1 of PfE requires development to aim to maximise its economic, social and environmental benefits simultaneously, minimise its adverse impacts, utilise sustainable construction techniques and actively seek opportunities to secure net gains across each of the different objectives.

Places for Everyone Policy JP-S2 sets out expectations for developments to minimise carbon emissions, following the energy hierarchy, and incorporating renewable energy and EV charging. JP-S2 has replaced existing policies within the Rochdale Core Strategy which related to these considerations.

Greater Manchester's vision is to be at the forefront of action on climate change and to make its fair contributions to international commitments by becoming a carbon neutral city region by 2038. To meet this target, PfE endorses the following commitments:

- Be carbon neutral by 2038
- Hold cumulative carbon dioxide emissions to without the carbon budget
- Initiate a programme of mitigation to reduce emissions including by:
 - Significantly upscaling solar photovoltaic energy;
 - Reducing heat demand in homes;
 - Moving away from carbon intensive gas as the primary source of heat;
 - Reducing heating and cooling demand for public and commercial buildings;
 - Increasing biofuel use;
 - Enable sustainable choices for travel and decarbonise transport;
 - Significantly upscaling building retrofit; and

- Increase the delivery of nature-based solutions and biodiversity net gain.

In accordance with Point 5 (d) of PfE Policy JP-S2 there is an expectation that new residential development will, unless it can be demonstrated that it is not practicable or financially viable, achieve energy demand reductions in terms of space heat demand, hot water energy demand and the delivery of on-site energy generation in accordance with table 5.1.

Table 5.1 of PfE is included below for reference:

Table 5.1 Best Practice Thresholds for Reducing Energy Demand and Onsite Renewable Energy Generation within residential developments

-	Space Heat Demand²⁵	Hot Water Energy Demand²⁶	Renewable Energy Generation Targets
2021 - 2025	Houses (30kWh/m2) Flats (25kWh/m2)	20% energy demand reduction in the total heat required for water heating	*Photovoltaic installation: 20% ground floorspace
2025 - onwards	Houses (20kWh/m2) Flats (15kWh/m2)	^20% energy demand reduction in the total heat required for water heating	*Photovoltaic installation: 40% ground floorspace
*Ground floorspace used as a proxy for available roof area.	-	-	-
^will need to be reviewed with Future Homes Standard 2025 to determine if savings already embedded.	-	-	-

In this instance, the application is not accompanied by an Energy and Sustainability Statement and for that reason, in line with current policy objectives and in the interest of encouraging a transition to a low carbon emission and energy network in accordance with CS Policies G1 and G2 and PfE Policy JP-S2, a condition is imposed to this permission requiring the submission of a renewable energy scheme (including but not limited to) the provision of solar photo-voltaic panels and / or air source heat pumps including details of their siting and appearance.

Accordingly, subject to condition, the proposal would be satisfactory in terms of the objectives of PfE Policy JP-S2 and CS Policies G1 and G2.

Other Matters

Boundary Fence

One of the objections received made reference to the shared boundary fence adjacent to the electrical substation.

The comments raised the following queries:

“We also note that the Site Plan and Block Plan fail to show the Proposed Development in the context of the surrounding land, in particular the boundaries of the Land with the electrical substation.

We have had our attention drawn to images 'PO2' and 'PO3' (appended to this letter) showing the western boundary of the Land as of October 2014 and September 2024, respectively. Image PO2 shows a clearly marked wire boundary fence between the Land and the land on which the electrical substation is located. Further, there is a clear portion of land visible between the boundary fence, and the electrical substation on images PO2 and PO3, consistent with the Location Plan submitted with the Application.

As of January 2026, the boundary fence now clearly abuts the electrical substation, with no land visible between fence and substation. We are not party to any discussions between the applicant and the owner of the electrical substation as regards the correct boundary line.

However, in the absence of an adequate Site Plan showing the electrical substation in relation to the Land/intended fence lines, it is not clear whether the boundary used on the Application documents represents the correct boundary between the Land and the electrical substation.

Therefore, it is not clear whether the Proposed Development in the stated dimensions can be built as proposed. This issue is highly relevant due to the proximity of the building and other design features to the boundaries on all sides, an issue consistent with our previous submissions regarding overdevelopment of the Land”.

The objection letter received clearly shows Google Street View evidence of the boundary fence and there being a clear gap between the fence and the substation. The evidence provided marries up with what is shown on the proposed plans submitted with regards to the positioning of the shared west boundary fence. However, owing to the benefit of a site visit and following correspondence with the applicant and landowner, it is evident that the fence has been repositioned to now stand immediately adjacent to the substation as shown below:



This suggests the application site has been extended to accommodate the proposed development. However, whilst the image above demonstrates the west boundary fence has been moved, the submitted plans have been designed in accordance with the correct boundaries.

The submitted plans clearly show a gap maintained between the substation and the application site and the development as proposed is to be built on land within the applicant's ownership. The application proposes a new fence along the shared boundary to the west and this will effectively reinstate the previous boundary line and therefore be positioned along the boundary as shown by Google Street View in 2014 and 2024.

The Local Planning Authority have the prerogative to exercise their planning enforcement powers in the event that the development is not built in accordance with the approved plans.

Conclusion

In summation, the application site is located within a sustainable location and this application is considered to make a positive albeit minor contribution to the housing supply and local economy within the borough. It is therefore considered that subject to the conditions included below, the development as a whole is acceptable and in accordance with the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, 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. This permission relates to the following plans and documents:

- Location Plan, Existing Site Plan and Street Scene Elevation Drawing No 975-01A Dated 20.05.2025
- Proposed Block, Site and Landscaping Plan Drawing No 975-02B Dated 20.05.2025
- Proposed Elevations Drawing No 975-05 Dated 20.05.2025
- Proposed Floor Plans Drawing No 965-03A Dated 20.05.2025
- Proposed Roof Plan Drawing No 975-04 Dated 20.05.2025
- Design and Access Statement Referenced 975-07
- Materials Schedule Referenced 975-06
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Dated September 2025
- Site Tree Appraisal Referenced RTS/29102925 Dated 29th October 2025
- Coal Mining Risk Assessment Report No: A250307-R01 Dated June 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, the saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. No development shall take place until a Phase I Report (Preliminary Risk Assessment) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The assessment shall investigate the actual and/or potential contamination risks at the site and the assessment shall investigate the nature and extent of any contamination on the site (whether or not it originates on the site). The assessment shall be undertaken by competent persons.

The submitted report shall include:

- i. a survey of the extent, scale and nature of contamination
- ii. an assessment of the potential risks to:
 - human health,
 - property (existing or proposed) including buildings, crops, livestock, pets, woodland, and service lines and pipes,
 - adjoining land,
 - groundwaters and surface waters,
 - ecological systems,
 - archaeological sites and ancient monuments;
- iii. where unacceptable risks are identified, an appraisal of remedial options and proposal of the preferred option(s) to form a remediation strategy for the site.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved remediation strategy thereafter.

No part of the development shall be occupied until a verification report demonstrating that the approved remediation has been implemented has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the safe development of the site in the interests of the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy G9 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-S1 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: Further investigation will be necessary prior to commencement of any building or engineering works on site.

4. No development shall commence until intrusive site investigations have been carried out on site to establish the exact situation in respect of coal mining legacy features. The findings of the intrusive site investigations shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for consideration and approval in writing. The intrusive site investigations shall be carried out in accordance with authoritative UK guidance.

Where the findings of the intrusive site investigations (required by the condition above) identify that coal mining legacy on the site poses a risk to surface stability, no development shall commence until a detailed remediation scheme to protect the development from the effects of such land instability has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority for consideration and approval in writing. Following approval, the remedial works shall be implemented on site in complete accordance with the approved details.

Prior to the first occupation of the development, a signed statement or declaration prepared by a suitably competent person confirming that the site is, or has been made, safe and stable for the approved development shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing. This document shall confirm the methods and findings of the intrusive site investigations and the completion of any remedial works and/or mitigation necessary to address the risks posed by past coal mining activity.

Reason: The undertaking of intrusive site investigations, prior to the commencement of development, is considered to be necessary to ensure that adequate information pertaining to ground conditions and coal mining legacy is available to enable appropriate remedial and mitigatory measures to be identified and carried out before building works commence on site. This is in order to ensure the safety and stability of the development, in accordance with Policy G9 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-S1 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for Pre-Commencement Condition: Coal Mining Legacy investigation and any required mitigation measures will require investigation before the significant disturbance to ground and removal of material.

5. Prior to the commencement of development, details of a sustainable surface water drainage scheme and a foul water drainage scheme shall be submitted to

and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage schemes must include:

- (i) An investigation of the hierarchy of drainage options in the National Planning Practice Guidance (or any subsequent amendment thereof). This investigation shall include evidence of an assessment of ground conditions and the potential for infiltration of surface water in accordance with BRE365;
- (ii) A restricted rate of discharge of surface water agreed with the local planning authority (if it is agreed that infiltration is discounted by the investigations);
- (iii) Levels of the proposed drainage systems including proposed ground and finished floor levels in AOD;
- (iv) Incorporate mitigation measures to manage the risk of sewer surcharge where applicable; and
- (v) Foul and surface water shall drain on separate systems.

The approved schemes shall also be in accordance with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (March 2015) or any subsequent replacement national standards.

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 promote sustainable development, secure proper drainage and to manage the risk of flooding and pollution.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: Drainage infrastructure will need to be implemented prior to commencement of above ground works and a scheme therefore needs to be agreed in advance of the same.

6. Prior to the commencement of development, a highway dilapidation survey of the access road fronting the application site shall be undertaken and be submitted in writing to the Local Planning Authority. For the avoidance of doubt, this should include photographs and commentary on the condition of the access road.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to ensure the functionality of the highway network in accordance with the Core Strategy Policy T2 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: The condition of the access road needs to be surveyed prior to the commencement of development to ascertain whether repair works are necessary post development.

7. Prior to the commencement of any development, site clearance, or earth moving no material or machinery shall be brought on site until a method statement to protect Alkrington Woods from accidental spillages, runoff, dust and debris has been supplied to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

All measures must be implemented and maintained for the duration of the construction period in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to prevent any habitat disturbance to the Local Nature Reserve and Site of Biological Importance in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-G8 of PfE and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: A method statement needs to be agreed and implemented prior to commencement of any development or site clearance to protect the Local Nature Reserve and Site of Biological Importance.

8. Notwithstanding any details submitted as part of the application, no part of the development shall be occupied until full details of the type, design and materials to be used in the construction of all boundary treatments have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Any structures shall be installed in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the approved development and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of ensuring a satisfactory visual appearance to the development and in accordance with Policies P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-P1 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

9. No site clearance or development shall occur between the 1st March and 31st August in any year unless a precautionary working method statement for nesting birds by a suitably experienced ecologist has been supplied to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to prevent any habitat disturbance to nesting birds in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-G8 of PfE and the National Planning Policy Framework.

10. The proposed development shall be carried out in full accordance with the recommended works contained within Arboricultural Method Statement incorporated into Section 5 of the Tree Appraisal Referenced RTS/29102925 and dated 29th October 2025.

All the recommended tree works should be of a standard that is in accordance with BS 3998:2010 Tree Work-Recommendations.

Reason: To safeguard the trees and vegetation to be retained.

11. No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until full details and specifications of a renewable energy or energy saving scheme (consisting of but not limited to) solar photo-voltaic and / or air source heat pumps including details of their siting and appearance, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of achieving the objectives of PfE Policy JP-S2 and CS Policies G1 and G2 and in the interests of ensuring a satisfactory visual appearance to the development and in accordance with Policies P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policies JP-S2 and JP-P1 of the adopted

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

12. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), or any equivalent Order following the revocation and re-enactment thereof, the dwelling hereby approved shall not be altered or extended, and no buildings or structure shall be erected within its curtilage under Schedule 2, Part 1 Class A, AA, B, D, E, F of the above Order.

Reason: To prevent undue harm to the amenity of existing and future occupiers and in the interest of visual amenity and in accordance with Policies P3 and DM1 adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and Policy JP-P1 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

13. No development shall take place until finished floor and external ground levels across the site relative to agreed off-site datum point(s) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details and retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interest of ensuring a satisfactory appearance and in the interest of amenity in accordance with Policies P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-P1 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: An understanding of proposed levels in relation to existing levels is required prior to commencement of any relevant engineering operations on site.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition (biodiversity gain condition) that development may not begin unless:

- a) A Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority,
- and;
- b) The planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan, if one is required in respect of this permission would be Rochdale Council.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because one or more of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements in the list below is/are considered to apply.

The proposed development is a Self and Custom Build Development, meaning development which:

- (i) Consists of no more than 9 dwellings;
- (ii) Is carried out on a site which has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares;
and;
- (iii) Consists exclusively of dwellings which are self-build or custom housebuilding (as defined in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015).

Procedure Statement

The proposal complies with the development plan and would improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. It therefore comprises sustainable development and the Local Planning Authority worked proactively to issue the decision without delay.

Informatives

1. Whilst the works have been assessed as having negligible risk for bats, the applicant is reminded that under the Habitat Regulation it is an offence to disturb, harm or kill bats. If a bat and the signs of bats is found all work should cease immediately and a suitably licensed bat worker employed to assess how best to safeguard the bat(s). Natural England should also be informed. We would suggest an informative to this effect be placed on any permission.