

Officer Report

Case Reference: 25/00929/FUL
Location: Rochdale Cricket Lacross And Squash Club Bridgefold Road
Rochdale OL11 5BX
Proposal: Construction of 6 padel tennis courts (4 covered, 2 uncovered) and new clubhouse building with changing facilities, café and raised terrace area. Creation of new parking spaces and associated boundary treatments
Recommendation: Approve with Conditions
Officer: Anna Hayes

SITE

This application relates to Rochdale Cricket, Lacrosse and Squash Club, a multi-sports complex in the Spotland Bridge area of Rochdale, approximately 1km west of Rochdale Town Centre. The ownership boundary of the club spans approximately 5.5ha, covering two football pitches, a cricket pitch, clubhouse and ancillary facilities and car parking and access via Bridgefold Road to the north.

This application relates to a smaller area of land immediately northwest of the boundary of the cricket pitch, which is currently used informally as a storage area for the club's mobile wicket cover. The area is bounded by a wooded area to the east, with allotment gardens behind, with a tall evergreen hedge immediately north. The nearest residential properties are those to the south on Chadwick Street and Glencoe Place, and 1 – 3 Oakenrod Villas.

PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for the construction of 6no. padel tennis courts and associated canopy, as well as the erection of a new clubhouse building with changing facilities, ancillary café and raised terrace area. Other works include the creation of new parking spaces and associated boundary treatments.

Proposed hours of operation are Monday to Friday 06:00 to 22:00, Saturday 07:00 to 22:00 and Sunday / Bank Holiday 08:00 to 21:00.

Any adverts or signage are not subject of this application, and where necessary, separate Advertisement Consent should be sought. Those illustrated within the plans and Design and Access Statement are indicative only.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).

Development Plan

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making.

The development plan for the proposal consists of the Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan, Rochdale Core Strategy (CS), adopted 2016, The Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan and saved Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies. The Council also has an adopted series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Supplementary Guidance Notes, which are other material considerations.

Sub-Regional

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE) (2024)

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:

Sustainable and Resilient Places

JP-S1 Sustainable Development

JP-S2 Carbon and Energy

JP-S3 Heat and Energy Networks

JP-S4 Flood Risk and the Water Environment

JP-S5 Clean Air

JP-S6 Resource Efficiency

Greener Places

JP-G1 Landscape Character

JP-G2 Green Infrastructure Network

JP-G7 Trees and Woodland

JP-G8 A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Places for People

JP-P1 Sustainable Places

Connected Places

JP-C1 An Integrated Network

JP-C2 Digital Connectivity

JP-C6 Walking and Cycling

JP-C8 Transport Requirements of New Development

Local

Saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2006:

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

G/3 Protection of existing recreational open space

EM/7 Development and Flood Risk

EM/8 Protection of surface and ground water

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS) 2016:

The Rochdale Core Strategy was adopted on 19th October 2016. The following policies are relevant:

SO2 Creating successful and healthy communities

C6 Improving health and well being

C8 Improving community, sport, leisure and cultural facilities

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

G6 Enhancing green infrastructure

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

Appendix 5 Schedule of Parking Standards

Managing delivery and monitoring progress

DM1 General Development requirements

SD1 Delivering sustainable development

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

Supplementary Planning Document 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' (2016).

Other

- National Design Guide (2019) (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government);

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

20/01608/FUL - Erection of building for indoor cricket practice – Approved 19.02.2021

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

During the course of the application, the site location plan was amended with alterations to the red line boundary (increased in size). As a result, the application was readvertised with a new site notice for a further 21 days (minimum), with new consultation requests issued to consultees and letters sent to neighbours in accordance with the statutory requirements.

The comments received are summarised below and explored in more detail within the main body of this report.

Highways And Engineering

Confirms no objection to this proposal at this location

Lead Local Flood Authority/Drainage

The drainage proposals are acceptable in principle subject to the points raised in our previous response being addressed during subsequent design stages

Env Health - Noise/Odours

No objection subject to conditions.

Tree Officer

No comments received to date.

United Utilities

No objection subject to conditions.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit

No object subject to conditions.

Sport England

Confirms no objection to the proposal.

Open Space - Environmental Management

No comments received to date

GM Fire Service

Non-statutory informative notes provided in relation to building regulations.

Lighting Engineer

No objection subject to conditions.

Environmental Control (Contaminated Land)

No objection subject to conditions.

REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been publicised with a site notice and neighbour notification letters.

To date, the Council has received 17 objections and 1 letter of support and 1 neutral.

The comments received have been summarised below:

- Existing spotlights at the club already cause problems; additional lighting would worsen the situation.
- Traffic and parking issues arise during club functions, with visitors blocking streets and turning points.
- Late-night noise from club users is a significant concern for those living nearby.
- Residents living near the back of the top field will be particularly affected by noise and lighting, especially in summer.
- Visitors and players can leave after events, but residents must endure the disruptions on their doorstep.

- Residents feel their needs and concerns have been ignored in favour of financial gain from the project.
- Potential negative impacts on pollution and local wildlife
- Overlooked and intrusion into living spaces and bedrooms
- Object to the late-night hours
- Overdevelopment and traffic congestion with lack of safe crossing points
- Community opposition – the proposal is not needed or wanted in the area
- Ecology Report is Incomplete and Inadequate
- Environmental impact
- Erosion of green space and concerns for the way in which the area is being overdeveloped
- Concerns that any future pollution, both noise and physical matter, could be misinterpreted as coming from existing businesses on Bridgefold Road.

Following subsequent amendments to the red line boundary, under the statutory requirements, the application was readvertised a further two times. Further objections were received reiterating the above.

Flood Risk

Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future).

Core Strategy Policy G8 also seeks to ensure that new development (including flood risk mitigation measures) does not lead to any form of increased 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, is itself well protected from flood risk and ensures prudent use of water resources.

The proposed development site covers approximately 0.24 hectares and is not located within Flood Zone 2 or Flood Zone 3. However, the Flood Map for Planning indicates that a small area within the site boundary is at risk of surface water flooding. The site does not fall within Heywood or Littleborough, which are the two designated Critical Drainage Areas within the borough. A Drainage Strategy Report has been provided.

The aim should be to discharge surface run off as high up the following hierarchy of drainage options as reasonably practicable. The Drainage Strategy Report indicates that infiltration and permeable paving will be used across the site; however, no site-based infiltration testing has been undertaken to determine feasibility. Should infiltration be found unfeasible, the report proposes discharge to the Red Brook culvert located approximately 25 m south of the site boundary. The design has been based on the 1-in-100-year storm event with a 25% allowance for climate change. Typically, a 45% allowance is required in line with Rochdale LLFA

standards. The proposals are to discharge foul water from the development to the existing foul sewer network serving the adjacent clubhouse.

The LLFA recommended that a Maintenance and Management plan for all drainage systems and components is required. United utilities have confirmed no objection subject to a condition requiring details of a SUDs scheme to be submitted and approved in writing. The agent is in agreement.

On the basis of the above, and subject to an appropriately worded condition, the proposal is found to be acceptable in regard to flood risk.

Ecology and Biodiversity

Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states that the planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.

In England, biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, subject to some exceptions including 'developments below the threshold', every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met. This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat. This increase can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains or statutory biodiversity credits.

PfE Policy JP-G8 also states that through local planning and associated activities a net enhancement of biodiversity resources will be sought where relevant. Development will be expected to achieve a measurable net gain in biodiversity of no less than 10%.

Greater Manchester Ecology Unit have been consulted on the proposal and raised the following comments (summarised below):

Bats

A Preliminary Roost Assessment (Arbtech – June 2025) has been submitted. A full internal and external inspection of the shed and a ground level tree assessment found negligible potential for the building and trees to support roosting bats. 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 for the building and trees, there is negligible potential for the works to disturb roosting bats and no further surveys are required.

Bats & lighting

Artificial lighting can affect the feeding and commuting behaviour of bats. Bats are likely to forage and commute along the retained woodland. The submitted Environmental Lighting Impact Assessment Report confirms that the Lux level back spill is 1 to 10. Given that the wood is relatively young, the lighting timing restrictions (to be secured by condition) and there are more optimal foraging and commuting routes nearby, GMEU are satisfied that no further information is needed in relation to bats and lighting.

Nesting Birds

The trees and shrubs to be removed 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. If tree and shrub removal is to be delayed until after the 1st of March, GMEU recommend a condition requiring the submission of a detailed bird nest survey to be submitted for approval, immediately prior to any works. The agent has agreed to such a condition.

Amphibians, large mammals and small mammals

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal felt that amphibians, badger and hedgehog could be negatively impacted by the development, but this risk could be suitably reduced through the implementation of avoidance measures.

Reasonable avoidance measures are justified during site clearance and construction a condition is therefore recommended on this basis.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The information submitted with the application includes a basic Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) report and statutory Biodiversity Metric from Arbtect (June 2025). The appraisal found the site had some ecological value, consisting of woodland, modified grass, bramble scrub and individual trees. GMEU have examined the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) metric spreadsheet and are satisfied with the calculations provided. The report concludes that after construction of the development, onsite biodiversity remediation and the 10% net gain requirement there is due to be a gain of 0.25 Area Habitat units and 0.01 Linear Hedgerow Units. GMEU confirm that this appears to be a realistic achievement for the site and therefore the LPA can be reasonably confident that the statutory biodiversity requirements could be discharged. On this basis, GMEU have confirmed that the Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) and Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) should be completed to show how the on biodiversity gain will be achieved and approved by the LPA, before the automatically applied statutory biodiversity gain condition can be released. Conditions to this effect are therefore recommended and have been agreed to by the applicant's agent.

Biodiversity Enhancement

In line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, the scheme should include measures to enhance biodiversity at the site and to provide a net gain for biodiversity. Therefore, opportunities for biodiversity enhancement should be incorporated into the new development and a condition requiring such details (Bat bricks and/or tubes within the new woodland and bird boxes within the woodland) to be submitted is recommended.

Overall, subject to conditions, GMEU and Officers are satisfied that the proposal is 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.

Land Contamination

Paragraph 180 of the NPPF seeks to prevent new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Core Strategy Policy G9 similarly seeks to ensure that sensitive new forms of development are not adversely affected by existing sources of pollution.

The Council's Environmental Health Officer has reviewed the following document submitted with this application:

- TJ Booth Associates, Geo-Environmental Audit, Phase 1 Preliminary Risk Assessment, Report Reference: rep-tjba-rochdale padel club-Phs1Env 090625.docx

It is noted that the report offers the following conclusions with regards to ground gas risk:

- Obtain and evaluate the historic gas monitoring data from the LPA assessment in 2013. The level of risk can then be quantified, and appropriate gas protection measures installed.

- Undertake gas monitoring. Due to the size of the proposed building, a single gas well should suffice in the location of the proposed buildings.

- Gas protection measures up to CS3 should be included in lieu of further assessment or monitoring subject to LPA approval, and agreement on the gas protection details.

However, the Council's Environmental Health Officer confirms that the remainder of the submission does not indicate what the applicant intends to do for either ground gas monitoring or gas protection measures to prevent the ingress of landfill gas or ground gas. On this basis, a condition requiring the submission of further details is recommended in order to ensure the safe development of the site 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.

On the basis of the above recommendations, there is no objection from a contaminated land perspective.

Other Considerations

Paragraph 96 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should strive to create healthy, inclusive, and safe environments by: encouraging social interaction and community engagement; ensuring places are secure, accessible, and designed to deter crime; and supporting healthy lifestyles through features such as green spaces, sports facilities, and infrastructure that promotes active travel like walking and cycling.

In order to provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, paragraph 98 of the NPPF states that, amongst other things, planning policies and decisions should "Plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments".

Core Strategy Policy C6 also seeks to improve people's health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities in the borough by creating an economic, physical and social environment which promotes and supports healthy lifestyles. This is achieved by supporting the provision of health facilities and services.

The proposal has been designed in accordance with the SAPCA Code of Practice for the Construction of Padel Courts (carried out in collaboration with the Lawn Tennis Association). All key safety, layouts and construction guidance has been followed. Officers are therefore

satisfied that the design therefore reflects best practice while ensuring the sustainable reuse of an existing building. The proposal also supports the aims and aspirations of Chapter 8 of the NPPF, in particular paragraphs 96 and 98 as above.

ANALYSIS

Principle

Policy C6 of the Adopted Core Strategy seeks to improve people's health and well-being and reduce health inequalities within the borough through creating an environment which promotes and supports healthy lifestyles and maintaining and enhancing, amongst other things, the borough's sport and recreational areas. Policy C8 seeks to promote the provision of better community, sport and leisure facilities.

PfE Policy JP-C1 encourages development patterns that minimise the need to travel by ensuring key services, including recreation and leisure, are well located and accessible. PfE Policy JP-P7 aims to protect and enhance sports and recreation facilities across the plan area.

The site is located within the Defined Urban Area. Policy G/D/1 of the UDP, which seeks to concentrate development in urban areas, is therefore relevant. Further to this, the proposed site is located in an area that is designated for recreational outdoor space and currently comprises an area of open space adjacent to the existing cricket field, under saved UDP policy G/3:

G/3 The development of public or private recreational open space for any other purpose will not be permitted unless one or more of the following exceptions applies:

...

d) The development comprises a built recreational facility of greater benefit to the wider community than the open space being lost and does not result in a serious deficiency in open space in the area.

With regard to criterion (d), such proposals will only be permitted where no suitable alternative brownfield site exists.

School playing fields which are surplus to educational requirements, and privately-owned sports grounds which have deteriorated due to lack of use and maintenance, will continue to be safeguarded from development as they still offer potential to meet current and future recreational needs.

Paragraph 104 of the NPPF also states:

Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or

b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or

c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

Proposed use

The proposed padel tennis facility would create provision of 6 new padel tennis courts including 4 covered and 2 uncovered, which would signify an improvement in the provision of recreational and sporting facilities at the site.

The proposal therefore meets the requirements of criterion d) of UDP policy G/3; which similarly aligns with the contents of exemption b) of paragraph 104 of the NPPF, as the proposed facility would be sited on an area of land that does not comprise the formalised area of the cricket playing field and is of limited recreational value as a result. This is also reaffirmed by Sport England (SE) who confirmed no objection to the proposal. Whilst it is noted that the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) recommend undertaking a ball strike assessment, SE have confirmed that, if approved, this would be a matter for the sports club to manage to ensure that the use of the cricket pitch is not unduly impacted by the proposed development and is therefore separate to this application. Additionally, Officers note that although the planning permission has lapsed, approval was previously given for constructing a new cricket facility. Since there have not been major planning policy changes since that decision, this historical background is relevant to evaluating the present application.

Sequential Test

Due to the nature of the application, in accordance with paragraph 91 of the NPPF, there is a question of whether the sequential test should be applied since 'intensive sport and recreation uses' are defined as being a 'main town centre use'.

The proposed development comprises of six courts and is expected to employ around 2 full-time employees and 4 part-time employees. The floor plans also indicate that the courts will be situated in close proximity limiting any capacity for continuous court-side spectator provision. Other facilities, including a café with a breakout seating area and padel equipment/retail wall, are proposed though these are ancillary to the main use as a padel tennis club. For these reasons, it is considered that a sequential test is not a requirement of this application since the development does not constitute an intense sports use as defined by the NPPF.

Therefore, subject to an assessment of other planning considerations within the scheme, the principle of a padel tennis facility at this location is acceptable and in accordance with the UDP, Core Strategy and NPPF.

Design

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping, in addition to being sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting and maintaining a strong sense of place.

CS policy P3 requires all new developments to enhance the borough's identity and sense of place and ensure that buildings contribute positively to the townscape. CS policy P2 seeks to protect and enhance the borough's character, the distinctiveness of its town centres, housing

areas and countryside through using heritage assets positively and intelligently to strengthen identity and image

The application seeks to erect a new padel club facility including 6no padel courts under a lightweight canopy structure with an ancillary two-storey clubhouse building.

The clubhouse building has been designed utilising shipping containers to deliver a “modern, industrial and sustainable aesthetic”. The external corrugated metal elevations of the shipping containers are to be finished in black, with feature timber cladding which adds design interest and breaks up the perceived mass of the building. Black aluminium frames are proposed to glazed areas which are considered complimentary and discrete. The building itself would be around 165m² in size at ground floor level, with a smaller first floor area of around 70m². Overall, it is considered that the building would not be overly dominant within its setting and due to its height (around 5.8m) it would clearly read as a subservient building to the main cricket, lacrosse and squash clubhouse to the west. The ‘open’ north and south elevations at the upper level, with glass balustrades, further break up any perceived bulk and mass of the building.

The lightweight canopy structure above the padel courts is of a double-arched tubular form constructed with a semi-translucent polycarbonate roof to allow natural daylight to pass through. In the evening, the full height and extent of the canopy roof structure above the padel courts will be illuminated by floodlights. The canopy roof structure would extend to a maximum of around 9m in height above ground level, 27m in width and around 45m in length. A 3m high v-mesh fence with 3m high ball netting fixed over between the posts is to be erected around the site. The existing service track will remain unaffected.

Views of the canopy structure would be extremely limited from public vantage points by virtue of the dense foliage bounding the site to the north, south and east, in addition to the separation distances present to the west. As detailed above, outside of daylight hours, the playing courts will be illuminated under the polycarbonate roof. However, visually, this is considered an established component of an outdoor sports and recreation environment to allow continued play throughout the evening. The site is also well screened by existing woodland and the lighting would only be present during a set, relatively short nighttime window (discussed in more detail in the residential amenity - lighting section below) and therefore is considered acceptable on balance.

The wider sports facility outside of the defined red edge (application site) comprises of a substantial clubhouse building; outdoor cricket nets and various other structures used for storage and other ancillary purposes. Whilst the proposal would have an undoubtedly significant impact on the overall appearance of the site as a result of its size and scale, it is not considered that it would be unduly harmful in this respect as the appearance of the structure is considered characteristic of a sporting facility.

Overall, the proposed club house will create new visual interest within its setting with a functional, modern and sustainable aesthetic. The canopy, whilst relatively large in size, would allow light to pass through due to the roofing material and minimise the perceived bulk of the structure through its semi-translucent finish. Further to this, siting of the structure ensures are mostly obscured by foliage. In light of the above assessment, it is considered that the proposed sports structure would constitute an acceptable standard of design and would therefore accord with policies P3 and DM1 of the Adopted Core Strategy and the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

At paragraph 135, the NPPF outlines the importance of planning in securing good standards of amenity for future and existing occupiers of land and buildings. Core Strategy policies DM1, G9, C1 and C6 cumulatively seek to reduce air and noise pollution, and DM1 in particular requires development to not adversely affect the amenity of residents or users through visual intrusion, overbearing impact, overshadowing or loss of privacy.

The proposal site would be sited approximately 50m north of the nearest residential properties on Glencloe Place, and in excess of 220m from the nearest residential properties on Pits Farm Avenue and Further Pits. Significant foliage exists between the proposed padel facility and these abovementioned residential dwellings which offers additional acoustic attenuation.

In support of the application, as requested by the Council's Environmental Health Officer, a Noise Impact Assessment was carried out and submitted. The Environmental Protection Team have reviewed the noise assessment prepared by es Acoustics, Reference: 22315.NIA-RPT.01, Dated: 4th December 2025. It confirms that monitoring was undertaken using 5-minute integration between 16:00 on Friday 28th November and 14:00 on Monday 1st December 2025. The noise assessment concludes noise levels on site, demonstrates that noise emissions associated with the proposed padel tennis courts are below the established criteria during the proposed courts operational period and will not have an impact on nearby residents.

The Environmental Protection Team also recommend conditions controlling construction hours, and conditions requiring the submission of any extract ventilation and odour control equipment, refuse details and details of any plant and equipment to be submitted for approval.

Officers find no grounds to dispute these findings and, consequently, regard the proposal as acceptable with respect to residential amenity.

Lighting

The application proposes the installation of outdoor lighting to illuminate the courts during the evening - nighttime hours. However, the Council acknowledge that objections have been received on the grounds of "excessive lighting" and "light spill". Following consultation with the Council's Lighting Engineer, a lighting assessment was provided confirming lantern types and their tilts, as well as lighting calculations. The Lighting Engineer is satisfied with the information provided and confirms that the impact of the lighting is minimal pre-curfew hours (pre 22:00). [In addition to the fact that the courts are well contained by existing woodland providing screening,](#) in order to further ensure that the lighting will not result in undue harm to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers, a condition is recommended which requires the development to be carried out in full accordance with the recommendations set out in Section 8 of the submitted Sports Lighting Assessment Report and that all external lighting associated with the padel courts shall be switched off no later than 22:00 hours each day of the week.

Access and Highway Safety

Paragraph 116 of the NPPF 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, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios".

Policy T2 of the adopted Core Strategy seeks to improve accessibility by locating development where good access to public transport is available or can be provided and, in all circumstances, prioritises the safety, accessibility and amenity of those who live or have business in the area. Policy DM1 also states that all development proposals should provide satisfactory vehicular access with adequate parking, manoeuvring, and servicing arrangements taking into account of the proposed use and location.

The proposal is not considered to intensify the use of the site so significantly as to warrant any concerns with regards to highways safety. The site has a number of existing facilities which accommodate different groups of visitors to the sites at various points throughout the day and year. Minor changes are proposed to the existing car parking layout with a total number of 100 parking spaces available on the site. The Local Highways Authority Highways Engineer has confirmed that the level of parking on site is adequate. The main operation of the sports club is at the weekend with much of the facility underutilised during the daytime and weekdays. The sports club is well removed from the strategic network and should overflow parking take place this is unlikely to impact upon the function or safety of the highway.

The third-party concerns raised about traffic congestion and highway safety have been duly acknowledged. However, following consultation with the Council's Highways Officer, who has confirmed that there are no objections, it is concluded that on balance, the proposal is acceptable in terms of highway safety and complies with paragraph 116 of the NPPF. A condition is recommended to secure the provision of the parking prior to the first operation of the development.

Conclusion

Overall, the proposed development would see the effective reuse of a predominately vacant parcel of land within an established sports club and generate employment opportunities whilst also encouraging social interaction and supporting healthy lifestyle opportunities for sport and recreation. Subject to conditions, the scheme satisfies ecological, flood risk and highway safety requirements. The application is therefore recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

Recommendation: Approve with Conditions

Condition(s) (15)

- 1 The development must be begun not later than the expiration of 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 by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following drawings and documents hereby approved unless otherwise required by the conditions below:

Plans

Drawing 005 revision C (Existing Location plan)

Drawing 007 revision D (Proposed Site Plan)

Drawing 008 revision A (Proposed Club House Floor Plans)

Drawing 009 revision A (Proposed Elevations 1/2)

Drawing 010 revision A (proposed Elevations 2/2)

Drawing 011 revision A (Proposed Club House Elevations)

Documents

Application form signed and dated 05.09.2025.

Geo-Environmental Audit, Phase 1 Preliminary Risk Assessment, Report
(Reference: rep-tjba-rochdale padel club-Phs1Env-090625.docx).

Sports Lighting Assessment Report

Environmental Lighting Impact Assessment Report (Document reference :
SHD2310-SHD-HLG-ROCH-RP-EO-Lighting Assessment Report-R0)

Noise assessment prepared by es Acoustics, Reference: 22315.NIA-RPT.01, Dated:
4th December 2025

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

3

The approved Padel facility shall not be open outside the following hours: Monday to Friday 06:00 to 22:00, Saturday 07:00 to 22:00 and Sunday / Bank Holiday 08:00 to 21:00.

Reason: In interests of amenity in order to reduce noise and general disturbance in accordance with Policy DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy.

- 4 The development hereby approved shall be carried out in full accordance with the recommendations set out in Section 8 of the submitted Sports Lighting Assessment Report. All lighting associated with the padel courts shall be switched off no later than 22:00 hours each day of the week and shall remain switched off until the approved padel facility reopens to users the following day.

The lighting system shall be maintained in accordance with the approved specifications for the lifetime of the development, and no alterations shall be made to the lighting equipment or its operation without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to minimise potential risk to protected species and to protect residential amenity in accordance with Policy G7 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-G8 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework

- 5 No tree or shrub clearance shall occur between the 1st March and 31st August in any year unless a detailed bird nest survey by a suitably experienced ecologist has been carried out immediately prior to works and written confirmation provided that no active bird nests are present, which has been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of preserving biodiversity 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 No development shall take place (including any site clearance, demolition or preparation works) until a reasonable avoidance measures statement for amphibians and mammals has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved statement thereafter.

Reason: In order to minimise potential risk to protected species and 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.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: site clearance poses a potential threat to amphibians and mammals which are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and protective measures must therefore be agreed in advance.

- 7 No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied until a scheme of biodiversity enhancements pursuant to that phase of development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such measure shall include, but not limited to, the provision of bird boxes within the woodland and bat bricks and/or tubes within the new woodland. The duly approved

scheme shall be implemented in full prior to final occupation of the phase of development to which the measures relate and retained thereafter.

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.

- 8 The development shall not commence until a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (the HMMP) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The HMMP shall be prepared in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan and include:

- 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, including a timetable for its implementation and completion;
- 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,

The created and/or enhanced habitat specified in the approved HMMP shall be completed, managed and maintained in accordance with the approved HMMP.

Notice in writing shall be given to the Council when the:

- a) HMMP has been implemented; and
- b) habitat creation and enhancement works as set out in the HMMP have been completed.

Monitoring reports shall be submitted to local planning authority in writing in accordance with the methodology and frequency specified in the approved HMMP.

Reason: To ensure the development delivers a biodiversity net gain on site in accordance with Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and policies G6 and G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and JP-G8 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan.

Reason for Pre-commencement: The HMMP will be required as part of the arrangements to be approved under the statutory BNG condition which requires submission of the Biodiversity Gain Plan prior to commencement of development.

- 9 No development shall take place until details of the extract ventilation and odour control equipment, plant and equipment, including details of any noise levels, noise control and external ducting has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and thereafter maintained.

Reason: To ensure that appropriate extract ventilation, odour control and noise mitigation measures are incorporated in order to protect the amenity of nearby residents and users, in accordance with Policy DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the NPPF.

- 10 The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until such time as details for the design of refuse/recycling bin store has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The duly approved scheme shall be installed in complete accordance and made available for use prior to the approved development first being brought into use. The approved refuse and recycling scheme shall be retained as constructed for its intended use 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.

- 11 No development shall commence until proposals for either ground gas monitoring or gas protection measures which are to be incorporated into the proposed building to prevent the ingress of landfill gas or ground gas, have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority.

The development shall thereafter be completed in accordance with the approved details and a Verification Report confirming the installation of the approved protection measures shall be 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: Details of remediation will be required to ensure the safe development of the site during the construction and operation phases of the development.

- 12 The café/club room hereby approved shall serve only as an ancillary facility supporting the operation of the tennis padel facility and shall not be used, managed, or accessed as an independent planning unit.

Reason: To prevent an intensification or alteration of use that could give rise to impacts not assessed as part of this permission, and to safeguard highway safety, residential amenity and the town centre hierarchy, in accordance with Policy DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the NPPF.

- 13 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 Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (or any subsequent amendment thereof). This investigation shall include evidence of an assessment of ground conditions and the potential for infiltration of surface water;

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 be in accordance with the National Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (2025) 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.

- 14 The development hereby approved shall be constructed in materials as detailed on the approved elevation Drawing 011 revision A (Proposed Club House Elevations) and as detailed with the submitted application form signed and dated 05.09.2025.

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.

- 15 The car parking, servicing and other vehicular access arrangements shown on the approved plans to serve the development hereby permitted shall be made fully available for use prior to the development being first brought into use and shall be retained thereafter for their intended purpose.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety and the free flow of traffic and in accordance with Policies T2 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-C8 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Approval Reason(s) (1)

- 1 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)

- 1 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 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 require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements listed below are considered not to apply.

Statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements in respect of the biodiversity gain condition.

1. The application for planning permission was made before 12 February 2024.

2. The planning permission relates to development to which section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (planning permission for development already carried out) applies.

3. The planning permission was granted on an application made under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and

(i) the original planning permission to which the section 73 planning permission relates* was granted before 12 February 2024; or

(ii) the application for the original planning permission* to which the section 73 planning permission relates was made before 12 February 2024.

4. The permission which has been granted is for development which is exempt being:

4.1 Development which is not 'major development' (within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015) where:

i) the application for planning permission was made before 2 April 2024;

ii) planning permission is granted which has effect before 2 April 2024; or

iii) planning permission is granted on an application made under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 where the original permission to which the section 73 permission relates* was exempt by virtue of (i) or (ii).

4.2 Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:

i) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and

ii) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

4.3 Development which is subject of a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. A "householder application" means an application for planning permission for development for an existing dwellinghouse, or development within the curtilage of such a dwellinghouse for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse which is not an application for change of use or an application to change the number of dwellings in a building.

4.4 Development of a biodiversity gain site, meaning development which is undertaken solely or mainly for the purpose of fulfilling, in whole or in part, the Biodiversity Gain

Planning condition which applies in relation to another development, (no account is to be taken of any facility for the public to access or to use the site for educational or recreational purposes, if that access or use is permitted without the payment of a fee).

4.5 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).

4.6 Development forming part of, or ancillary to, the high speed railway transport network (High Speed 2) comprising connections between all or any of the places or parts of the transport network specified in section 1(2) of the High Speed Rail (Preparation) Act 2013.

*original planning permission means the permission to which the section 73 planning permission relates"" means a planning permission which is the first in a sequence of two or more planning permissions, where the second and any subsequent planning permissions are section 73 planning permissions.

For the purposes of paragraph 13 (a) above, a biodiversity gain plan is a plan which:

- (a) relates to development for which planning permission is granted,
- and;
- (b) specifies the matters referred to in sub-paragraph 14(2) below:

The matters are:

- (g) information about the steps taken or to be taken to minimise the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the onsite habitat and any other habitat;
- (h) the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat;
- (i) the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat;
- (j) any registered offsite biodiversity gain allocated to the development and the biodiversity and the biodiversity value of that gain in relation to the development;
- (k) any biodiversity credits purchased for the development; and
- (l) any such other matters as the Secretary of State may by regulations specify.

ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT INFORMATIVE:

Should it be intended to display any advertisement at the premises, the applicant is advised to contact the Local Planning Authority with details to establish whether a separate application is required for approval under the Advertisement Regulations (2007).

ECOLOGY INFORMATIVE:

3

The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended it is an offence to remove, damage, or destroy the nest of a wild bird, while the nest is in use or being built. Planning consent does not provide a defence against prosecution under this act. If a birds nest is suspected work should cease immediately, and a suitably experienced ecologist employed to assess how best to safeguard the nest(s).