

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.
25/00312/FUL

CASE OFFICER
Ryan Killeen

DETERMINATION DATE 04.06.2025 **EXT OF TIME**

Address: Land At Junction Of Water Street And Molesworth Street, Rochdale

Proposal: Development of a drive-thru restaurant (Use Class E / Sui Generis) with associated access, servicing, car parking, hard and soft landscaping, substation, engineering works and other associated works

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?	Y

EIA	Screening opinion completed and saved to Onbase?	N
-----	--	---

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

RECOMMENDATION	REFUSE
----------------	--------

CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: Melanie Hale

DATE: 27/2/26

SITE

The application relates to a 0.39ha site set to the southern side of the junction of Molesworth Street and Water Street to the east of Rochdale town centre that is used as a surface car park. The site is predominantly surfaced in tarmac with limited vegetation to its southern and western boundaries. More substantial structural landscaping is set further south and west along Water Street. The topography of the site means that the Water Street entrance is set circa 124m AOD and the junction of Water Street and Molesworth Street c.125.5m, and the southern extent of the site as high as 132m AOD.

Land to the south of the site is also used as a continuation of the surface car park which covers the site, in addition to a cleared former scrap yard site, with the site opposite to the north of Water Street occupied by a Premier Suzuki car dealership. To the far side of Molesworth Street, which runs latitudinal along the site's eastern boundary, is a pair of retail units which accommodate a Home Bargains and TK MAXX store, with dedicated parking set around each unit. Owing to its edge of town centre location, there are also a number of other notable uses within the vicinity of the site including an ALDI store 65m northeast, Rochdale Leisure Centre 170m to the east, Rochdale Riverside retail development is circa 230m northwest, Number One Riverside which accommodates Council services is 200m west and Rochdale Metrolink Station and Bus Station are circa 300m west of the site.

The River Roch meanders approximately 70m north of the site however the site sits wholly within Flood Zone 1.

PROPOSAL

Planning Permission is sought for the development of a drive-through restaurant (use Class Sui Generis) including a widened access from Water Street. The building comprises a broadly cuboid, two-storey structure set at the eastern end of the site which is accessed through the west facing elevation with bin store & delivery entrance enclosed within a curved boundary treatment projecting from the north facing elevation. The building is faced in dark grey and red bricks with white canopies set across the west and east facing elevations at varying heights. The building includes a small external patio to the south, enclosed within a low fence. Internally the ground floor predominantly accommodates the dining area, and customer male, female and accessible WCs and back of house area comprising the customer and delivery driver order points, drinks production area, fry vats and bagging station, cash booth and order assembly tables. The upstairs of the building is accessed via back of house stairs or goods and passenger lift, and accommodates staff spaces including toilets/changing facilities, walk-in chiller and freezer, store room, crew room and office, and the kitchen area which includes 2no. meat grills, 5no. deep-frying vats and production line that is accommodates toasters, universal holding containers, and ingredient storage.

The building would be encircled within a drive-through lane which begins along the Water Street boundary before bifurcating to accommodate two separate ordering points at Customer Order Display (COD) boxes set underneath individual canopies, before the lanes diverge to a single one, wrapping around the bin store and running parallel to Molesworth Street, where the cash booth and food collection window associated with use of the drive-through are positioned. The drive-through lane wraps further round to the southeast perpendicular to Molesworth Street and widens to accommodate parking

at the fast-forward window and hold bays where customers wait a short time whilst their orders are prepared.

A total of 35 car parking spaces are included within the car park set at the western end of the site inclusive of 2no. accessible spaces and in addition to 3no. motorcycle spaces. Cycle storage for 6 bikes is proposed to the front of the store, adjacent to the patio area.

In order to accommodate the development, much of the site is required to be excavated, with the increasing land levels to the south held by a contiguous pile retaining wall reaching up to 10m in height.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
National Design Guide (NDG)
National Model Design Code (NDMC)
Building for a Healthy Life

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE)

Sustainable and Resilient Places

JP-S1 Sustainable Development
JP-S2 Carbon and Energy

Greener Places

JP-G7 Trees and Woodland
JP-G8 A Net Enhancement in Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Sustainable Places

JP-P1 Places for People
JP-P6 Health

Connected Places

JP-C1 An Integrated Network
JP-C6 Walking and Cycling
JP-C8 Transport Requirements of New Development

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

SO1 Delivering a more prosperous economy

E1 Establishing thriving town, district and local centres
E2 Increasing jobs and prosperity

SO2 Creating successful and healthy communities

C6 Improving health and well-being

SO3 Improving design, image and quality of place

P1 Improving image
P3 Improving design of new development

SO5 Improving accessibility and delivering sustainable transport

T1 Delivering sustainable transport

T2 Improving accessibility

DM1 General development requirements

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

Guidelines and Standards for Hot Food Takeaways SPD

Urban Design Guide SPD

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

13/00797/FUL Change of use of land to form car park including demolition of former Carcraft buildings – Granted STC September 2013

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Lead Local Flood Authority/Drainage

Summary: SuDS Hierarchy has not sufficiently investigated.

Env Health - Noise/Odours

No comments received to date

Env Health - Air Quality

No comments received to date

Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service

Summary: Site may hold archaeological significance which should be investigated and recorded by condition. The application makes no reference to any potential archaeological significance contrary to NPPF para. 207.

Gtr Manchester Ecology Unit

Summary

Ecological Assessment: The site has been found to be of relatively low ecological value, no further surveys are required. Invasive species can be dealt with by condition, in addition to nesting birds precautionary working.

BNG: There are minor errors with BNG assessment including how trading rules are to be satisfied.

GM Fire Service

No comments received to date

Highways And Engineering

May 2025 Summary

The proposal will attract significant traffic which will see the junction of Water St and John St operating beyond capacity, which would have significant knock-on effects to junctions in nearby proximity.

There is inadequate provision for pedestrians & Water St requires significant improvement in terms of infrastructure and crossings.

There does not appear to be adequate parking provision.

The site cannot be safely serviced by delivery vehicles.

Oct 2025 Summary

After several iterations we have an agreed working junction. In addition, we have managed to resolve much of the remaining outstanding issues.

No objections should the applicant agree to:

- Fund changes to the junctions in line with proposal agreed with TfGM
- Installation of uncontrolled crossings on Water Street and Molesworth St
- Contribution of £5,000 for the revision of TROs in vicinity of site
- Contribution of £20,000 for the installation of junction enforcement cameras

Public Health - Kuiama Thompson

Summary: Objection on basis that proposals conflict with NPPF in respect of being located close to where young people congregate & impact on health of adults and children locally due to an over concentration of similar uses.

Environmental Control (Landfill Gas)

Summary: recommend condition.

Transport For Greater Manchester

May 2025 Summary:

Trip generation calculations appear acceptable.

It is not clear how trip distribution has been calculated

Junction modelling predicts that the junction would operate over capacity, however within the TA this is justified as a worse-case scenario. Modelling should be repeated to be as realistic as possible – otherwise the figures supplied indicate that the junction would need to be signalised.

Modelling of the Molesworth St Junction is not representative of the actual running of the junction.

Advice provided on internal access, TROs and site accessibility.

Sep 2025 Update:

TfGM UTC have reviewed the updated modelling and confirm errors have been corrected and modelling is acceptable.

United Utilities

Summary: The drainage proposals are not acceptable as it is not evidenced that the drainage hierarchy has been thoroughly investigated.

Urban Design

No comments received to date

REPRESENTATIONS

Letters of notification were sent to all surrounding properties and a notice was posted in the vicinity of the site. 8 letters objecting to the development were received with 4 in support.

Objections relate to the following matters:

- Drive through restaurants generate short distance car journeys which give rise to traffic and air quality impacts
- There are two drive-through restaurants from the same chain nearby
- There are plenty of vacant units that are available in the town centre
- Access to the site will give rise to highways safety impacts

Matters relating to the suitability of the use for the proposed site are considered in the 'Principle of Development' section of the report, with highways relating to traffic generation and highways safety considered within the 'Highways' section of the report.

Letters of support note the potential economic contributions from the proposals which are noted within the assessment below.

ANALYSIS

Principle of Development

Paragraph 90 of the NPPF requires planning policies and decisions to support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities. Paragraph 91 leads onto require LPAs to apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are not in an existing centre. Core Strategy Policy E1 places similar requirements on the decision making process in respect of the need for a sequential approach to assessing planning applications for out-of-centre development.

The site is located in an out-of-centre location. In support of the application, a sequential test has been provided which has searched for other suitable sites within and adjacent to the town centre. The term '*suitable*' in respect of the search for alternative sites has been established through the courts and by the Inspectorate to mean "*suitable for the development proposed by the applicant.*" NPPG expects both applicants and LPAs to demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale however the degree to which this should occur will depend on the facts and circumstances of the particular case.

It is well-established through the appeals system that such flexibility in the context of a drive-through development should not require the applicant to consider development that excludes the drive-through element. As the site is adjacent to the Rochdale town centre boundary, as defined under saved UDP Policy G/S/1 and S5, as per paragraph 92 of the Framework, only sites within the town centre, or those which are outside, but are better connected to, would be considered sequentially preferable. The applicant's

planning statement considers available sites within Rochdale town centre, a number of local centres and within linear commercial areas and has made a reasonable effort to demonstrate that there are no more reasonably available, sequentially preferable sites.

Public Health

Paragraph 97 of the NPPF requires local planning authorities to refuse applications for hot food takeaways and fast food outlets which are:

- a) within walking distance of schools and other places where children and young people congregate, unless the location is within a designated town centre; or
- b) in locations where there is evidence that a concentration of such uses is having an adverse impact on local health, pollution or anti-social-behaviour.

In the context of paragraph 97a) the discounting of '*locations*' within a designated town centre is considered to refer to the location of the development proposed, as it would align with the aspirations of the NPPF to locate main town centre uses (which the proposal would fall under the definition of, as set out in Annex 2 of the NPPF), which would also broadly align with the approach set out within Section 4.3 of the Guidelines and Standards for Hot Food Takeaways SPD (*The SPD*).

As the site falls outside of the designated town centre boundary, the contents of this paragraph are relevant. It is noted that there are no schools within 400m of the proposed development and as such the consideration of paragraph 97a) is reduced to places where children and young people congregate.

Rochdale Bus Station serves as a transport interchange for bus services throughout the borough connecting all townships and adjacent boroughs, whilst also sitting adjacent to the Rochdale Town Centre metrolink station, which serves multiple stops in Rochdale, Oldham and Manchester. Given its proximity to both Rochdale Sixth-Form College and Hopwood Hall College Rochdale Campus, the Bus Station is well frequented by the 16-18 year old age group, in addition to other school children alighting either bus or metrolink services within the town centre to catch connecting services to and from their place of education and home.

Rochdale Riverside is a recently constructed retail and leisure destination within the Town Centre that includes an extensive areas of public realm, a collection of high-street retailers and hospitality services in addition to leisure attractions which include a cinema and crazy golf amongst other amenities. Given its proximity to transport infrastructure which is already well-used by children and young people, it offers a destination for people to spend time and extend trips to the town centre.

Both locations are within a 400m (typically 5 minute) walk from the development proposals, and circa 800m away from both colleges and would therefore provide a convenient and attractive service for young people.

The applicant has sought to argue that the congregation of young people at a transport hub within the town centre should be discounted on the basis that the proposals comply with the requirements of the sequential test in relation to main town centre uses, as if the development were to be located within the town centre, (as would be sequentially preferable) then it would be exempt from paragraph 97a).

Given that paragraph 97a) already identifies uses within a main town centre as an exemption, and further exemption on the basis of compliance with the sequential test would significantly undermine the clear intentions of this paragraph. The wording of Paragraph 97a) reads exhaustively and it is not considered therefore that compliance with the sequential test is sufficient justification to overcome conflict with this paragraph, where the site is located outside of the boundary of the designated Rochdale town centre, and would be within walking distance of places where young people congregate.

Whilst it is noted that the town centre also hosts a number of other HFT uses (predominantly at South Parade/Drake St junction) the proposals provide a discernibly different offer that would be likely to generate new demand for fast food from young people visiting the town centre and the presence of such existing uses does not provide a compelling justification to discount paragraph 97a) in this regard.

More generally, CS Policy C6 seeks to improve people's health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities through a number of measures which include preventing over-concentrations of takeaway food premises where they may encourage unhealthy eating habits. Paragraph 97b) of the Framework also seeks to resist hot food takeaway uses where there is evidence that a concentration is having an adverse impact upon local health, *inter alia*.

The Council's Public Health Service have been consulted on the application and have provided a detailed analysis of the prevalence of fast-food uses and health outcomes in the vicinity of the site and Borough as a whole. The response notes the concerning levels of childhood obesity in the borough, which amongst reception age children is the highest in Greater Manchester and significantly worse than the national average. For reception aged children, this figure rose 11% between years 2022/23 and 2023/24 to 11.7% total (for reference this figure was noted to be 8.8% in 2012/13 within the SPD), with circa 50% higher incidences of obesity in the same age group within the Central Rochdale ward where the proposals are located.

In adults, the picture is similarly poor with 73.3% of adults across the borough classed as having excess weight, circa 10% above the Northwest average. This is having materially damaging impacts on health outcomes with incidences of circulatory diseases amongst under 75s significantly worse than the national average, and life expectancy substantially reduced.

The Public Health Service have identified that within Central Ward and the adjacent Milkstone and Deeplish Ward, there are a total of 83 (split 41 and 43 respectively) fast food uses, with the Borough overall registering the 19th highest rate of fast-food uses per 100,000 population nationally (18th highest nominally at 347).

Within the supporting planning statement, the efforts of the operator to improve the nutritional qualities of their food has been set out, however it is not known as to habits of customers in the uptake of healthier options, nor the health impacts of any existing operations.

The Public Health response notes that many factors do influence such statistics, and it is appreciated that this matter is more complex than attributing it to the prevalence of hot food takeaway uses, however they do conclude that overall quantities of food which is high in fat, salt and sugar that is being eaten does play a significant role in the current rise of preventable illnesses.

Overall, the proposals would place an additional hot food takeaway use within an area which has been identified as having one of the highest concentrations of such uses nationally, and where there are poor health outcomes within children and adults that include preventable illnesses which in part, can be attributed to dietary choices.

In the absence of evidence that clearly discounts that health outcomes in both children and adults both locally and across the borough would not be worsened as a result of the development, the application is contrary to the requirements of The Guidelines and Standards for Hot Food Takeaway Uses Supplementary Planning Document, Policy C6 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, PolicyJP-P6 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the NPPF.

Furthermore, the application would also place a fast-food outlet within walking distance of places where young people are known to congregate, contrary to the requirements of December 2024 revisions to paragraph 97a) of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Anti-Social Behaviour

In respect of Paragraph 97b) of the framework, the Council's Community Safety Service has provided a review of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Road-Related incidents and demands on the Fire Service within the Council's Rochdale Town Centre Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) Zone, which the site falls within.

A total of 140 police-reported ASB incidents were recorded within the PSPO zone; an average of 12 each month. The majority of incidents were reports of rowdy or inconsiderate behaviour and vehicle nuisance. Within the PSPO zone, a number of locations including Water Street were noted as repeat locations for ASB.

In addition, the review highlights incidences of ASB at the location of other drive-through restaurants operated by McDonald's in Rochdale. Sandbrook Park attracted 23 police-reported ASB incidents over the previous 12 months which predominantly related to rowdy or inconsiderate behaviour, of which 4 related to McDonald's. 26 police-reported road-related incidents were recorded in the same period at Sandbrook Park which related to erratic driving, intoxicated drivers and drug use within vehicles.

At Kingsway Business Park, a total of 10 police-reported ASB incidents were recorded over the previous 12 months, 3 of which related to McDonald's. Incidents at both locations related to people refusing to leave the restaurant and violent behaviour.

In reviewing the incidences of ASB reported against the presence of Hot Food Takeaways within the town centre (as supplied within the Public Health response) it would appear that the two broadly correlate in terms of concentrations of ASB and concentrations of HFT uses (noting particular examples at South Parade and just north of Wetrake Gardens).

The proposed use clearly would therefore generate a level of ASB within a location which already presents a noticeable level of ASB associated with similar uses, despite the efforts of the Council to establish a PSPO zone.

Such incidences as highlighted by the Council's Community Safety Team are clearly low however, and it is not apparent that the concentrations of HFT uses are a defining aggravator, nor is it apparent that the level of incidences sit noticeably above the

prevailing levels of ASB with the opposite inferred at both Kingsway, and in particular Sandbrook Park.

As such, whilst ASB incidences do somewhat correlate with the existence of ASB, it is not sufficiently evidenced that it is the concentration of HFT uses specifically, which drive these events and therefore no conflict is found with paragraph 97b) of the Framework in this regard.

Pollution

The SPD sets out that litter is inherently unsightly and of considerable annoyance to residents and business, and also is a potential attraction to pests and vermin.

The proposals would see the majority of food cooked on site taken away for consumption. All food would be packaged and any eaten within the immediate period following serving would generate a requirement for refuse containers, in the absence of which littering would be encouraged. The SPD notes that litter is a potential negative impact of a proposal which can be mitigated in part through the provision of litter bins.

Water Street benefits from only a single litter bin, and the proposals include 4 bins located across the development, albeit away from the main pedestrian desire lines. Those making journeys from the site towards the town centre would only encounter their first waste container opposite Waterside House, 125m from the site entrance, between which Water Street suffers from a lack of natural surveillance and stewardship that would otherwise disincentivise littering. Littering can therefore be observed along Water Street.

Within Rochdale Town Centre there are a number of hot food takeaway uses already operational which do generate refuse requirements for members of the public who choose to take their food away from the premises, which is typically served for by waste containers sited around the town centre. Waste is well-served by existing waste containers with any littering effectively managed by the Council's Environmental Management service to the point that there is little visible on a day to day basis.

It is acknowledged that McDonald's generally hold a positive reputation for their efforts to reduce littering, effectively employing 'trash walks' to collect not only littering arising from their goods, but from others, however the distance between the proposed use and town centre, and the poor provision of waste bins would inevitably lead to waste from the proposed use being a common sight along Water Street.

In taking a balanced view on this matter, the proposals would like give rise to minor conflict with the SPD, which in part can be addressed through condition requiring a details of any waste management, with any residual negative impact able to be addressed under environmental health legislation through a street litter control notice under a regime separate to planning.

Design, Character and Appearance

The NPPF is clear that significant weight should be given to development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, and conversely, is clear that development which is not well-designed should be refused. In support of this, the Government have produced a suite of guidance documents including Building for a Healthy Life (BHL), the National Model Design Code (NMDC) and the National Design Guide (NDG) which form a material consideration in the assessment of the design of

development proposals, and aid Local Authorities and developers alike in understanding if development proposals are well-designed.

PfE Policy JP-P1 sets out a number of requirements in respect of the design of new development in aspiring for the Greater Manchester City Region to become one of the most liveable city regions in the world. In order to do this, new development should be distinctive, with a clear identity which (*inter alia*) respects and acknowledges the character and identity of the locality in terms of design, siting, size, scale and materiality, and be visually stimulating, creating interesting and imaginative environments. CS Policy P1 seeks to improve the image of the borough by requiring high-quality design in all new development, especially at local gateways into centres and town centres. Policy P3 establishes a number of design requirements for new development which are broadly consistent with the aims and requirements of national design guidance.

The site comprises a surface car-park at the edge of Rochdale Town Centre, and is set amongst other commercial uses including car and motorbike dealerships, and large retail stores, with all surrounding uses typically benefitting from their own surface car park that almost exclusively makes up any remaining curtilage not occupied by buildings. Despite this, vegetation does feature along the River Roch corridor, and to the south of Water Street. More incidental forms of landscaping are found interspersed throughout the site albeit are visible only locally.

Within the wider context, much of the historic development of Rochdale exists, including complexes of C19 and early C20 industrial buildings to the south of the application site, and the historic forms of development within the town centre. More recently, Rochdale Town Centre has undergone significant transformation with Number One Riverside Council Offices, transport interchange and the re-opening of the River Roch being delivered within the past 15 years, and Rochdale Riverside retail and leisure complex and Upperbanks residential-led development delivered in the past 5 years, with supplementary efforts from smaller projects including a Heritage Action Zone. All of this has culminated in the detailed restoration of the Grade I listed Rochdale Town Hall, creation of a vast pedestrianised square, and the re-opening of Broadfield Slopes.

In order to accommodate the proposals, the site must be excavated and regraded at level with Water Street, a retaining wall is proposed to a contiguous pile specification. Contiguous pile retaining walls rely on a series of successive, unconnected, cast-in-situ concrete piles with small gaps between each pile. This style of retaining structure would appear as an undoubtedly industrial feature that would be uncommon of an edge of town centre location. The irregularity of the structure would be exacerbated by the stepping up and down of the wall in order to correspond to undulations in the retained ground and overall would amount to a visually incongruous and harmful feature that would sit at a disharmony with its surroundings. Cascading planting is proposed along the length of the wall which would soften the visual impact of the highest parts of the wall, however owing to the scale and highly-engineered appearance of the wall, it would be insufficient to make any meaningful contribution to integrate the wall as a positive feature of the local townscape. Furthermore, such planting must be relied upon for the lifetime of the development in order to prevent substantial adverse impacts, which cannot be controlled by way of condition.

Given that the car park to the south of the site is publicly accessible and in light of the already discussed attractiveness of the site to children and young people, the stepped retaining wall would be considered as a potential health and safety hazard and ASB attraction as it could be easily climbed. Having regard to paragraph 102a) of the Framework, the safety of children in relation to potential hazards is required to be

considered by the decision maker, and the risks associated with the design of the retaining wall are clearly not suitably mitigated for by the inclusion of a timber field-boundary style fence at the top of the wall, given the ease at which this design of boundary treatment can be traversed. Accordingly, the proposals would conflict with Paragraph 102a) of the Framework.

In turning to the layout of the proposals, the majority of the site is covered with hardstanding, with a two-storey building set to the north-east set back between 5 and 10m from Molesworth Street and Water Street in order to accommodate a drive-through lane. The south and west of the site almost exclusively accommodates vehicular parking and circulation space, with pedestrian accesses set to the northern and southern sides of the car park.

Over two-thirds of the site would be covered by hardstanding (not including the building) with the majority of that associated with the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles throughout the site, thus the majority of time which the site is operational, would be dominated by vehicles, and when usage is lower, the site would become an unmitigated expanse of hardstanding, which whilst similar in layout to adjacent land uses, is not typical of the wider townscape and neither picks up on any positive physical characteristics of the surrounding built environment. Given the expanses of hardstanding already present in the immediate vicinity of the site, which is unbroken from the River Roch to the east and north, and that all forms of hardstanding adjacent accommodates vehicles, the proposals would only exacerbate the harmful visual qualities of the surrounding environment and would be visibly car dominated.

The choice to place the building towards the junction of Molesworth Street and Water Street would provide a degree of visual interest to the proposals, however, owing to the appearance and form of the building, would fail to be well designed.

In comparison to the originally submitted elevation drawings, the revised proposals have sought to make the two-storey form of the building more legible through the inclusion of recessed panels and false windows at ground and first floor respectively. The number and placement of windows at first floor level is inconsistent across all elevations; the east facing elevation has an unbroken run of 9, the north elevation has 7, split between a run of 5 and 2, the south elevation 3 and west, one. There is little correspondence between any openings (including false windows) at ground and first floor level in terms of their alignment, size and shape, and the contribution of the first floor windows is diminished further through the design choice to include the majority of windows as ornamental additions to the elevation, which do not provide views in or out of the building and would not activate it as a result. The arrangement of windows is therefore considered to appear highly-unresolved and would not contribute positively to the design of the building,

The simple form of the building is articulated to some degree as the corral is a partially curved, single storey form projecting from the northern elevation, and the southern end of the building is stepped in from the front and rear and a corner chamfered. The plant parapet would also see a stepped back feature at roof level. The overall form of the building does however appear as an assemblage of incoherent forms which do not relate well to one another, or to the positive characteristics of the site's context. Two white canopies would be included to the east and west facing elevations and would wrap further to the north and south elevations, which would only serve to further compound the visually perplexing form of the building.

The irregularity of the building would only be further highlighted by the choice to face the elevations in grey and red brick which is seemingly applied randomly across the

building. Whilst it is acknowledged that the choice to revise the timber claddings to brick would better relate to the historic characteristics of the site's locality, it does not achieve any positive forms of visual interest and instead exacerbates the confused and incoherent appearance of the building.

Overall, whilst the building would certainly distinguish itself as a contemporary addition to the site, the NDG and relevant design policies are clear that well-designed buildings respond positively to the character of an area, and are visually attractive to the delight of their users; the proposed building would achieve neither and would ultimately fail to be well-designed.

The importance of landscaping is highlighted within the '*Nature*' chapter of the NDG, with well-designed development integrating existing, and incorporating new natural features into a multifunctional network that supports quality of place, biodiversity and water management, and addresses climate change mitigation and resilience. Notwithstanding an assessment of the arboricultural and ecological impacts of the proposals, the proposed level of landscaping, in respect of its coverage, would be largely consistent with existing vegetation coverage, however the majority of the vegetation would be set along the southern and western boundaries, with a narrow strip set around the north and east of the proposed building, between the drive-through lane and the adopted highway network.

The proposals would see the removal of trees and vegetation which extend into the site from the well-established landscaping lining Water Street and Robinson Street to the west, and do contribute positively to the appearance of the site, and overall verdancy of the surrounding area, which is also supported by landscaping along the river corridor.

Landscaping proposals are concentrated at the edges of the site and predominantly comprises the planting of species rich turf and an area of native mixed scrub. The largest contiguous area of landscaping would wrap around the drive-through, with space for tree planting at the base of the retaining wall. Additional tree planting is also proposed at the western end of the site, in proximity of the proposed sub-station and site entrance.

The proposed landscaping would appear to occupy spaces which are left over after fulfilling operational requirements; that which is set to the northern and eastern boundaries of the site is typically between 1 and 3 metres wide, with as little as 20cm at the highly visible northern corner at the junction of Water Street and Molesworth Street, with additional space available at the south-eastern corner.

The landscaping efforts would clearly appear as an afterthought with little formality to their arrangement and with such little space afforded to them. The constantly varying and narrow width of the buffer which surrounds the drive-through would sit in contrast to the highly-engineered and orderly layout of the car park and drive-through which would neither offer any form of mitigation to the visual impacts already highlighted, nor complement the design of the rest of the proposals, and instead would appear as a conspicuous, poorly-considered aspect of the site that would ultimately fail to be well-designed.

Where landscaping is more substantial and is capable of accommodating a number of trees, it would offer some screening of the retaining wall which has been highlighted as a visually incongruous feature. The visual implications of this are appreciated, however proposed tree planting is only of heavy stock some 3-3.5m high and 12-14cm DBH, thus would not only be dwarfed by the retaining wall, but would not offer effective screening of this section of the retaining wall until the medium-term when it is well-

established. Owing to the extent of hardstanding within the site, landscaping efforts would, even when fully established, only be capable of screening approximately one-third of the retaining wall, and would therefore not be capable of fully mitigating its visual impact. Further cascade planting has been proposed to the top of the retaining wall, however as already discussed, this does not provide any meaningful or reliable mitigation.

In turning to the provision for pedestrians and active travel users who may use the site, the NDG sets out that well-designed development should ensure that “Priority is given for pedestrian and cycle movements... Prioritising pedestrians and cyclists mean creating routes that are safe, direct, convenient and accessible for people of all abilities.” Paragraph 117 of the Framework also establishes a number of transport design requirements for new development relating to pedestrians, cyclists and people with reduced mobility. PfE Policy JP-C6 seeks to assist in delivering higher-proportions of journeys made by walking and cycling, in part through establishing expectations for the appropriate design of new development.

The safety of pedestrians and other active travel users is considered in detail further in this report, however the experience of pedestrians, and a scheme’s ability to encourage active and more sustainable modes is pertinent to the overall quality of its design.

Pedestrian access points are provided at 2 points along Water Street, at the vehicular entrance to the site, and circa 40m from the junction with Molesworth Street. In order to access the store, pedestrians would be required to take either the footpath from the western side of the access along the south of the site, or the one to the east of the access along the north. Neither route is considered to be particularly intuitive to pedestrians as any provision largely comprises of whatever space remains after accommodating the drive-through and parking, nor do they take account of expected desire lines, considering views of the store at the points where pedestrians access the site. In diverting pedestrian routes around the fringes of the site, doubling back at points and creating longer routes to the store, it is clear that pedestrians and active travel users would not be the priority user within the site as they navigate the vehicle-dominated environment. Visitors may be incentivised to take more direct routes to the store, which notwithstanding any risk to their safety, would not be to the delight of the user.

The inadequate pedestrian provision would be felt most by those with reduced mobility, wheelchair users, those with prams wishing to enter the store, who are not able to make use of the disabled parking provision as such vulnerable users would be forced to adhere to the indirect and convoluted routing. It also appears that the entrance to the site does not provide any dedicated crossing facilities (such as raised tables etc.) to infer priority for pedestrians. Additionally, aside from the two zebra crossings, there are no intuitive at-level points to access the patio area around the front of the store other than across the hatched area associated with the accessible parking bays.

Through this determination period, it has been negotiated with the applicant that the cycle parking provision be increased and improved in quality to the extent where there are now 4no. spaces within cycle lockers and 6no. spaces within Sheffield stands which would exceed the minimum requirements as set out in Appendix 5 of the CS and is considered appropriate even in light of the extensive use of cycles by delivery drivers.

In concluding the assessment of the design merit of the proposals, and its visual impact, the test for the decision maker in considering whether a development should be refused on design grounds is not only the consideration of the impact upon the character and appearance of an area, but whether the proposals are well-designed,

primarily in the context of the guidance of the National Design Guide as the most relevant piece of guidance.

In applying the Guidance, it is clear that the proposals fall well-short of the expectations of national design policy which ultimately seeks to require a minimum-level of design quality in new development. This expectation is not met as the proposals being considered comprise a form of development which is a wholly car-dominated, unsustainable form of development that places pedestrians and active travel users (in particular those who are most vulnerable) at the lowest priority, which sits at a disharmony with the positive qualities and characteristics of the surrounding built and natural environment and seeks to deliver visually unresolved and incongruous forms of development at a secondary gateway to, and at the edge of, Rochdale Town Centre. The proposals therefore fail to comply with contents of Policies P1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-P1 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Regard has been had to paragraph 137 of the NPPF which sets out that applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably as it is acknowledged that the applicant did undertake consultation with the community through an online portal. The Council do provide a chargeable pre-application advice service however, which was not utilised prior to an application being made. Taken cumulatively, such considerations would weigh neutrally overall in the overall planning balance.

Highways

Paragraph 116 of the Framework is clear on the circumstances when development proposals should be refused on highways grounds; when either 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. Paragraph 117 goes on to set out a number of more detailed requirements for new development with regards to affording priority to other users, addressing the needs of vulnerable users and servicing and EV charging.

CS Policy T2 establishes a number of requirements for new development, including setting out the priority hierarchy in further detail. Policy DM1 requires new development to provide satisfactory vehicular access with adequate parking, manoeuvring, and servicing arrangements taking into account of the proposed use and location. PfE Policy JP-C8 requires new development to be designed to encourage walking, cycling and public transport use in addition to detailing specific requirements for new development in respect of its connectivity, design, parking and servicing requirements.

The application is supported by a Transport Assessment (TA) that considers the impact upon the highway network which has been reviewed by both Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) and the Local Highways Authority (LHA).

Modelling within the TA is based upon traffic generation figures generated from traffic counts at three restaurants which are considered to be similar as they:

- Are located on suburban key supporting arterial routes
- Are located within a short distance of a significant retail/shopping offering
- Are of a similar scale to the proposal

Despite the TA noting that the Applicant regularly undertakes traffic counts, three counts dating from 2014/2015 have been provided. It is noted that this data would pre-

date the adoption of delivery technology within stores so delivery driver traffic is not accounted for. Notwithstanding, the TRICS data has instead been relied upon as the data selected returned results higher than the stores which were reviewed, which has been accepted by TfGM and the LHA.

Furthermore, both TfGM and the LHA have picked up on the relative unattractiveness and inadequacy of the surrounding highway network for pedestrians and cyclists, contrary to the findings of the TA, which taken in combination with the safety concerns of fly-parking and poor visibility, would give rise to unacceptable pedestrian safety concerns.

A revised model was produced by the applicant and agreed with the relevant transport authorities, it is considered that the development can be made acceptable in planning terms subject to appropriate mitigation which includes various junction upgrades, pedestrian crossing facilities and a review of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) in the area. As such matters relate to the requirement for a financial contribution and off-site works, it is necessary that they be secured by planning obligation under S.106 of the 1990 Act or, as the works would relate to land within the adopted highway, by Grampian condition. The applicant has indicated their willingness to comply with such expectations and the mitigation could therefore be relied upon in the event the application were to be approved.

As has been detailed at-length, and within the context of paragraph 117 of the Framework, the proposals do not give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements within the scheme and within neighbouring areas, and do not address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility.

The layout of the site and parking provision means that customers are incentivised to take desire lines to enter the store given the unintuitive routing of footpaths that result in a drastically longer journey and frustrating pedestrian experience. It is likely therefore that drivers and pedestrians (including prams and children) will mix within the car park, with the manoeuvres required to exit the angled parking spaces leading to blind spots, particularly for children and those in prams or wheelchairs that may not be as visible above the cill of a vehicle that could result in low-speed crushing incidents.

The proposals do include an interim travel plan which reviews access to the site by non-car modes, concluding that the existing pedestrian facilities and public transport links within the vicinity of the site are of a high-quality. The Travel Plan sets out provisions to encourage cycling such as changing facilities, and discounts on bicycles in addition to cycle parking. It is not clear how many staff could be on site at peak times, and how many of them may travel to the site on a bike, in addition to how many customers could be on site and any additional contribution made by delivery riders, and if the proposed cycle storage provision is sufficient to accommodate for all needs.

The LHA has also previously raised concerns with the proposed servicing arrangements, which rely on 4no. spaces being kept free and a further two spaces being overrun as demonstrated by swept path. An additional one space, and several hatched areas (which may be perceived as refuge areas by pedestrians) would also be overrun on egress by delivery vehicles, and in order to turn west along Water Street, would need to turn left from the centre of the entrance, which would not be readily apparent for any vehicles arriving to the site from the east who may consider it safe to access the site. It is unclear how the operator intends to ensure that all 7 spaces can be kept free for delivery and servicing events, and also how users of the site can be made aware of the space required to accommodate servicing requirement. It is possible that such events could be managed through taking place only during the quietest trading

hours, or before and with a robust management plan, which could be secured by condition.

Overall, suitable mitigation could be secured by Grampian condition and by legal agreement to satisfy the requirements of the Framework in respect of preventing a severe impact to the network, however the proposals would not ensure a safe environment for pedestrians, cyclists, and in particular, the most vulnerable groups of society where they are unquestionably not afforded priority by design. The proposals therefore fail to comply with the requirements of Policies T2 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policies JP-C6 and JP-C8 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Amenity

The aims of CS Policy DM1, PfE Policy JP-P1 and the Framework are broadly aligned in that they all seek to ensure that new development delivers a high-standard of amenity for existing and future residents.

Generally, the area around the site is devoid of any residential uses, with the nearest being the consented conversion of Waterside House c.130m west of the site access, and the Molesworth Hotel, c.140m south of the drive-through lane. By virtue of the separation, there are no concerns in respect of a loss of amenity for any existing or future residents by way of overbearing impact, overshadowing or a loss of privacy.

A noise impact assessment has been carried out, taking account of all operational activity and plant noise across a 24hr day which the proposals seek to be open for trade. The assessment concludes that the greatest increase at the nearest noise sensitive receptor would be <1dB, where such increases can be considered to have a negligible impact. The matter of car door slamming has also been considered by the NIA, which falls well below the WHO derived criteria for individual event levels across an eight hour night.

Deliveries are noted to be required 3 times per week, and whilst there are inaccuracies in the assessment as to where the delivery vehicle is to be parked upon arrival, the noise levels generated at the nearest sensitive receptor would be no greater than 5dB higher than the existing background sound level, and the NIA concludes that there is no requirement to restrict delivery hours. The report considers any potential matters for uncertainty but ultimately concludes that the impact on the nearest noise sensitive receptors would be very low, especially given the distance between and the existing noise climate.

Whilst no response was received by the Council's Environmental Health Service, the methodology and conclusions of the NIA appear reasonable which could be required by condition in the event of an approval.

The application is also supported by an odour assessment, which utilising accepted industry methodology, concludes that a high-level of odour control would ordinarily be required, however, as this requirement is borderline in the first instance, and as there are no sensitive receptors likely to experience nuisance from kitchen extract discharge, an approach of maximising dispersal into the atmosphere is recommended, utilising a number of measures widely employed across other stores run by the applicant. It is considered that the absence of sensitive receptors would form an appropriate justification for the approach proposed and it is considered that the proposals would fulfil the aims of Policy G9 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.

Trees and Ecology

Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity, providing net gains where possible, and contributing to the Government's commitment to halt decline. Policy G6 of the adopted Core Strategy expects development proposals affecting green infrastructure to avoid the loss of existing features such as trees unless suitable alternative provision is made or they have limited value. Core Strategy policy G7 requires that no development should result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity.

The site is of relatively limited ecological value, owing to the fact that the vast majority is hard-surfaced in tarmac. Notwithstanding, the adjacent woodland does slightly protrude into the site providing a degree of verdancy.

The supporting Ecological Appraisal considers habitat on-site and nearby to assess any potential impacts of development, which, are likely to arise through construction activity. Accordingly, a suite of recommendations in order to fulfil policy and legislative requirements are proposed which seek to protect the adjacent woodland and nesting birds, prevent the spread of invasive, non-native species and appropriately inform the design of any artificial lighting.

The report has been reviewed by the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) who are content with the report's findings and recommendations, which can be conditioned where appropriate.

In turning to the arboricultural impacts of the development, the supporting Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) notes the need to remove 7no. trees (5no. Willow, 1no. Alder, 1no. Sycamore) to facilitate the proposals, of which form part of the same group which are noted to be Category B2 (moderate landscape quality).

The trees do make a modest contribution towards the character and appearance of the area, and the overall impact of their removal and any compensation from a visual standpoint has already been assessed to be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area.

Replacement planting comprises 13 species which overall, is 1 short of the 2:1 replacement ratio required by CS Policy G6 and PfE Policy JP-G7. Given the serious concerns held over the proposed landscaping scheme, additional tree-planting would be required to meet the requirements of the aforementioned policies in any revised scheme.

As the site is eligible for Biodiversity Net Gain, a BNG assessment has been completed along with a statutory metric which indicates that a 12.41% uplift in BNG, however trading rules are not able to be satisfied due to the loss of woodland. GMEU have requested details on how the trading rules are to be satisfied in order to be confident that the gains can be secured. The statutory condition applicable to the development on the grant of planning permission would require the satisfaction of trading rules prior to the commencement of development and as it is not feasible to achieve an uplift in medium distinctiveness woodland units on-site, off-site compensation could be reasonably proposed to satisfy the metric.

Other Matters

Energy and Carbon

PfE Policy JP-S2 requires new development to be net-zero carbon in respect of regulated operational carbon emissions and in support of this, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority has published a suite of guidance documents to support the design of new development and the evidence to support planning applications.

Whilst the application is not supported by an energy statement, the supporting Design and Access Statement does include a section on sustainability, which outlines the operators intentions to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions relating to restaurants by 36% by 2030, and other improvements to supply chains.

It is established within the report that the design of the building, which would be fossil fuel free, would be supported by the operators' procurement agreements to secure 100% renewable energy which would effectively secure operational net-zero.

The proposed building is to be of a modular construction, making use of materials which are suitable for recycling, albeit full details of this have not been supplied.

The application is not supported by a completed Carbon and Energy Proforma that has been produced by the GMCA to objectively establish the sustainability credentials of the proposals, however the application has made a modest effort to demonstrate how the environmental impact can be minimised. In the event the application were to be approved, a condition could be recommended for a full scheme of works to be supplied to the LPA to minimise the environmental impact of the development.

Matters relating to operational efforts to minimise waste and recycling are commendable, however given it is waste generated by the development, such considerations would weigh neutrally.

Drainage and Flooding

The site falls within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at a low risk of flooding (less than 1 in 1000 or 0.1% annual probability of river or sea flooding in any year) and therefore Flood Risk does not form a consideration in the determination of the proposal.

A drainage statement provided with the application seeks to discount infiltration on the basis of expected made ground depths and the potential for contaminants, and discharge into water bodies is also discounted on the basis that the River Roch, despite being 60m away is to the other side of nearby buildings.

Both the LLFA and United Utilities are not satisfied that the proposals have robustly investigated the drainage hierarchy and are therefore non-compliant with non-statutory technical standards for SuDS.

In the event that permission were to be granted, a condition requiring the submission of an investigation into the drainage hierarchy and the subsequent formation of a sustainable drainage scheme could be required by condition.

Further to the above, given the prevalence of grease and oils used in the day to day operations of the store, which will often need to be cleaned-up and any cloths/mops subsequently cleaned, there is a significant threat to drainage infrastructure where such compounds can accumulate and block or damage such vital infrastructure. If the

application were to be approved, a pre-occupation condition requiring the submission of a scheme for the installation of a grease trap would be required.

Ground Conditions

A desk-top review of ground conditions, including contamination was undertaken which considered historic use of the site as a brick and tile manufacturer, print works, iron works and garage, which in combination with a site walkover was determined to present a low to moderate risk of on-site contamination. The report recommends that intrusive investigations are undertaken to understand the extent of any ground contamination and ground gases and inform any remediation.

The report has been reviewed by the Council's Contaminated Land Officer who is content with the recommendations of the report and has recommended a condition accordingly.

Archaeology

The historic uses of the site have been highlighted by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) as potentially being of some archaeological and historic interest; C19 mapping shows the western part of the site as being occupied by print works, with the remainder of the site exploited as a brick field that may have housed brick kilns, before being redeveloped into a factory known as Victoria Works, and the printing works redeveloped into workers housing by the end of the C19.

GMAAS have noted that no supplementary information in respect of the below-ground potential of the site has been submitted with the application, nor make reference to the historic environment more generally, contrary to the requirements of the NPPF.

Given that below-ground potential cannot be discounted, GMAAS have recommended a condition in order to meet the requirements of paragraph 218 of the Framework in respect of recording and advancing the understanding of the significance of heritage assets, subject to which the proposals would comply with the requirements of CS Policy P2, P1E Policy JP-P2 and the Framework.

Planning Balance

The development proposals have been found to be inappropriate in principle, having regard to the wording of Paragraph 97a) of the Framework which was revised in December 2024 to restrict such uses as proposed within this application where it is within walking distance of locations where young people would congregate. Additional harm has been found against the backdrop of a dire and worsening public health context, both within the immediate locality of the proposals, and across Rochdale more generally, which the proposals would negatively contribute to. Such matters taken cumulatively carry very substantial weight.

The proposed use would also be one that is generally associated with level of anti-social behaviour that would undermine the efforts and intentions of the recently established public space protection order, however, reported incidences of ASB at similar uses are, taken individually, noted to be low. This matter is afforded limited weight given the relatively small-scale nature of the impacts in the wider context.

The proposals have also been assessed to fall well-short of being a scheme which is well-designed, in respect of its layout, building design with regards to its form, scale, materiality and detailing, landscaping and use of retaining structures and the

fundamental creation of a car-dominated environment, that would also cause harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area, which would carry very substantial weight.

Whilst the application does consider its impact upon the highway network, in the absence of a signed legal agreement to secure the necessary off-site mitigation through financial contribution, a severe impact is not able to be discounted. The pedestrian environment lacks the necessary priority for such users, including vulnerable users, and safety issues are identified both with the access of the scheme and the proposed servicing arrangements. It is also unclear as to whether there is suitable provision for secure, long-term cycle storage as to encourage use of active modes of transport by employees of the site. Taken collectively, such matters are afforded substantial weight.

The economic benefits of the proposal have been outlined as generating 185 FTE construction jobs as well as a further 225 indirect FTE jobs during the construction phase with a total of £10.75m gross value added. The application does not describe in any detail as to where the jobs would be generated, and how much value created would be retained within the borough, however such matters would carry moderate to significant weight.

The development would generate business rates income of C.£75,000 per annum. As this is essentially a means for the Council to ensure that negative externalities are internalised, i.e. costs to the Council arising from the proposals, it attracts very little weight, more so as the impacts of the development described within the reasons for refusal may directly or indirectly result in increased costs to the Council.

The operator's business is well-known for benefits which it delivers in respect of its Charity which supports families with children in hospital, support of grass roots football. Such benefits are delivered nationally however and no evidence has been submitted to clearly establish any additional benefit that can be attributed to the proposals, and what tangible benefits are felt locally and such matters therefore attract very little weight.

The proposals would create 120 (90 FTE) jobs once operational, which it is acknowledged would serve as a gateway to employment for many people not currently in work which may in turn reduce strain on public funds and services, and enable those who have found work to build up meaningful skills and recognised qualifications. Whilst the full potential economic impact of this has not been clearly set out within the application, the Council would not dispute that this matter would carry substantial weight.

Matters relating to the impact on surrounding occupiers are noted to be policy compliant, and ecological impacts of the development can be dealt with by condition, including the statutory net gain condition. Matters relating to drainage, archaeology ground contamination and carbon and energy are, subject to conditions, policy compliant and as such, weigh neutrally. The endeavours of the operator in respect of their recycling efforts and use of biodegradable packaging is an effort to minimise negative externalities arising from their operations and as such do not attract any weight.

The proposal would result in benefits, but it would also cause harm. Weighing the two up is not a mathematical outcome; it is an overall judgement. Many of the benefits could theoretically be delivered through a similar scheme on the site with a satisfactory design.

In this case, due to the harms that the proposal's design would cause and the impact upon public health, the adverse impacts of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

There are therefore no material considerations to indicate that this decision should be made otherwise than in accordance with the development plan

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE planning permission for the following reasons:

- 1 The development proposals would site a fast-food outlet within walking distance of Rochdale Interchange, Rochdale Riverside, Rochdale Sixth Form College and Hopwood Hall College and thus are in clear conflict with the requirements of paragraph 97a) of the National Planning Policy Framework. Furthermore, the application is not supported by sufficient evidence that clearly discounts an adverse impact upon the health outcomes in both children and adults both locally and across the borough given that it would place an additional hot food takeaway use within an area identified as having one of the highest concentrations of such uses nationally, and where dire and declining health outcomes in children and adults that include preventable illnesses which can in part be attributed to poor dietary choices have been identified. The application is therefore contrary to the requirements of Policy C6 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-P6 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 2 The proposed development, in light of the proposed site layout, building position, boundary treatments, engineering works and landscaping, the absence of active frontages to the surrounding highway network, the dominative presence of large expanses of car parking, clear lack of priority for pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable users, and the scale, form and elevational treatment of the store building would fall well-short of the expectation for new development to be well-designed. The development proposals ultimately comprise a form of development which is a wholly car-dominated, unsustainable form of development that places pedestrians and active travel users at the lowest priority, which sits at a disharmony with the positive qualities and characteristics of the surrounding built and natural environment and seeks to deliver visually unresolved and incongruous forms of development at a secondary gateway to, and at the edge of, Rochdale Town Centre. The proposals therefore fail to comply with contents of Policies P1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-P1 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 3 By reason of the site access and the internal site layout, the proposals would not ensure a safe environment for pedestrians, cyclists, and in particular, the most vulnerable groups of society as they would fail to be afforded priority by design. The proposals therefore fail to comply with the requirements of Policies T2 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policies JP-C6 and JP-C8 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Procedure Statement

The proposal would not improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area nor does it comply with the development plan and therefore does not comprise sustainable development. There were no amendments to the scheme, or conditions which could reasonably have been imposed, which could have made the development acceptable, and it was therefore not possible to approve the application.

Notes for Applicant:

For the avoidance of doubt, this decision relates to the following list of plans:

- 3484_AEW_2285_1001 – Location Plan
- 13484_AEW_2285_1002 Rev. C – Block Plan
- 4230334-SK03 Rev. I2 – Existing Site Plan
- 13484_AEW_2285_1004 Rev. E – Proposed Site Plan
- 13484_AEW_2285_1005 Rev. D – Proposed Building Elevations
- 13484_AEW_2285_1006 Rev. B – Proposed Building Floor and Roof Plan
- 13484_AEW_2285_1012 – Proposed Site Sections and Contextual Elevations
- 13484_AEW_2285_1015 Rev. B – Proposed Site Landscape Plan
- A6748-01 Rev. C – Landscaping Scheme
- 4230334-1101 Rev. P1 – Retaining Wall Details
- 4230334-SK01 Rev. I4 – Proposed Levels and Overland Flow Routes