

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.

25/01165/FUL

CASE OFFICER

Majid Mir

DETERMINATION DATE 10.03.2026 **EXT OF TIME**

Address: CROSSGATES PRIMARY SCHOOL, KILN LANE, MILNROW, ROCHDALE, OL16 3HB

Proposal: Installation of new wire mesh boundary fencing with double and single gate accesses

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

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

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

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

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: RG

DATE: 10/03/2026

SITE

The application relates to Crossgates Primary School. The school is located on the edge of a residential area. To the north, west and east is open greenfield land. The school along with these parcels of land are all located within the Green Belt. To the south and further west, are residential properties located within the Defined Urban Area.

The public highway and the main entrance to the school is from Kiln Lane which is located to the south of the school.

PROPOSAL

Permission is sought to install new boundary treatment and access gates along the perimeter of the school grounds. In parts of the site it will replace the existing boundary treatment, and in other parts of the site it will be newly installed boundary treatment.

The boundary treatment will 2.4m high and constructed of green mesh. Multiple double and single gates are proposed along the perimeter of the boundary treatment.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Sub-Regional

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan

JP-P1	Sustainable Places
JP-P5	Education, Skills and Knowledge
JP-G6	Urban Green Space
JP-G7	Trees and Woodland
JP-G8	A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity
JP-G9	The Green Belt

Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

T2	Improving accessibility
P3	Improving design of new development
G6	Enhancing green infrastructure
G7	Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

N/A.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

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

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

93/D29931 – Class Room Extension. Decision: Approve with Conditions.

96/D33018 – Single Storey Extension To Front Of School. Decision: Approve with Conditions.

98/D35680 – Single Storey Extension To Primary School. Decision: Approve with Conditions.

01/D39150 – 2 Single Storey Extensions To Existing School. Decision: Approve with Conditions.

04/D42955 – Two Single Storey Classroom Extensions To School Decision: Approve with Conditions

05/D45008 – Erection Of Single Storey Classroom Extension And Covered Shelter. Decision: Approve with Conditions.

12/D55519 – Erection of a temporary single storey modular classroom unit with link extension to rear of main school building, single storey extension to front of main building and formation of new hard surfaced play area. Decision: Approve with Conditions.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

School Services:

I can confirm on behalf of Children's Services that we fully support this application which has been prepared in full consultation with the school to make their boundary/site more secure and enhance safeguarding of the building users, whilst ensuring minimal impact on the environment and neighbouring properties.

REPRESENTATIONS

Site Notice:

N/A.

Press Notice:

N/A.

Neighbour notification letters:

Letters of notification were sent to neighbouring properties. No responses have been received.

ANALYSIS

Principle of Development – Green Belt

The application property and the whole of the curtilage is located within the Green Belt. Policy JP-GP9 of the adopted Places for Everyone DPD (PfE) is relevant to any applications on the site due to it being in the Green Belt. This policy reiterates the purposes that are served by Green Belt designation and should be read alongside the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Paragraph 142 of the NPPF states 'the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.' Paragraph 153 of the NPPF establishes that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 153 also states that Local Planning Authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF establishes that local planning authorities should regard development as inappropriate in the Green Belt unless it meets one of the exception criteria identified in the paragraph. The proposed development would not fall within one of the exception criteria identified in the list. Paragraph 155 also sets out when development of homes, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should also not be regarded as inappropriate. Again, the proposed development would not meet the criteria set out in paragraph 155.

In regard to the impact on the openness of the Green Belt. "Openness", for the purpose of Green Belt policy is not formally defined within planning policy or legislation but is taken to mean the absence of built development. The term "openness" comprises a spatial and visual component which should be assessed in considering whether a proposal preserves the openness of the Green Belt. Paragraph 013 (Reference ID: 64-013-20250225) of the Planning Practice Guidance provides further advice on what factors can be taken into account when considering the potential impact of development on openness. The guidance makes it clear that when assessing this impact on the openness of the Green Belt, it requires a judgment based on the circumstances of the case.

The site presently has trees planted around the boundary and there are hedges planted along the front. The proposed boundary treatment would sit behind the hedges along the front and would be installed in front of trees around the rest of the site. This would soften the visual impact of the proposed boundary treatment. When viewed from the north, the boundary treatment would be viewed with the school and the neighbouring residential properties in the backdrop. Furthermore, the boundary treatment would retain an open aspect.

However, it is noted that it will replace existing lower level boundary treatment and would be set at a height of 2.4m. Overall, the proposed development would have limited impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Taking into consideration the above, it is concluded that the proposed development would represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt and would have a limited impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

The subsequent sections of the report considers the other material considerations relevant to this application and will identify whether any other harm would arise as a result of the proposal and whether 'very special circumstances' exist so as to outweigh

the harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, harm to openness and any other harm.

Design and Visual Amenity

To the west the existing boundary would be retained with the proposed boundary being set slightly further west. The boundary would still be set approximately a minimum of 66m away from the rear of the residential properties on Wildhouse Lane.

The application also proposal additional fencing around the car park. However, this would be set behind proposed fencing that will be located along the boundary with Kiln Lane. The existing boundary treatment along Kiln Lane will be replaced by the proposed boundary treatment.

In terms of its design, the proposed fencing and gates proposed are of a style that is commonly seen at schools for security. The proposed fencing and gate will be see-through mesh and would have minimal impact given its open appearance. Additionally, it is noted that the proposed boundary treatment will be only 0.4m taller than what schools are permitted to install under permitted development rights. This would not be materially different from what is being proposed.

It is noted that there is need for the fencing due to safeguarding concerns. The proposed boundary treatment would retain an open aspect and would be set in front of existing trees within the site and behind existing hedges to the front. This would reduce the visual prominence of the boundary treatment.

Overall, the proposed boundary treatment the is considered to offer a balance between providing the required level of security and not being overly obtrusive form of boundary treatment. Therefore, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of visual amenity and impact on the surrounding area. The application would therefore accord with the relevant policies within the adopted Core Strategy, the PfE and the NPPF.

Amenity

Considering the design of the proposed boundary treatment and the distance from the residential properties, it is considered that the proposed development would not unduly impact on the amenity of the neighbouring properties. As such, it is considered the proposal accords with the relevant policies within the adopted Core Strategy, the PfE and the NPPF.

Trees and Biodiversity

There are numerous trees scattered around the site and in close vicinity to the proposed boundary treatment. An arboricultural report was submitted along with the application. The report identified 26 individual trees and 5 groups of trees. The report recommended felling of T9 and T16. The report noted that the majority of the trees have had none or minimal previous pruning works and as such recommended crown lifting all the trees to gain a 2.5 meter clearance. In accordance with policy G6 of the adopted Core Strategy which requires a replacement ratio of 2:1 for all felled trees, it is considered appropriate to include a condition requiring 4 replacement trees to be planted to replace the two trees that are being proposed for felling.

It is considered that the proposed boundary treatment can be installed without substantive tree losses. However, no details of this have been provided as a part of the planning application. For the protection of the trees and biodiversity, it is considered

appropriate to include a condition requiring an Arboriculture Method Statement and a Tree Protection Plan to be provided prior to installation of the boundary treatment.

Subject to the inclusion of the conditions, the proposed is considered to acceptable and would comply with policies G6, G7, P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, policy JP-G7 of the adopted Places for Everyone DPD and the NPPF.

Planning Balance, Very Special Circumstances and Conclusions

As outlined above, the application comprises of inappropriate development within the Green Belt, which is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. limited harm has been identified to the openness of the Green Belt. The harm identified on the Green Belt must be afforded significant weight in the overall planning balance.

Paragraph 153 states that inappropriate development should not be approved except in very special circumstances. The proposed development through the installation of 2.4m boundary treatment along the perimeter of the site would have limited impact on the openness of the Green Belt and would represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

As noted above, the boundary treatment can be constructed under permitted development rights up to a height of 2m. The additional 0.4m would not have material impact on the visual amenity or openness of the Green Belt. Furthermore, the proposed boundary treatment would be set behind the hedges along Kiln Lane and would be sited in front of trees around the rest of site. As noted above, this would reduce the visual prominence of the boundary treatment. Furthermore, it is noted that the proposed boundary in parts would replace existing boundary treatment.

The proposal is compliant with local, regional and national planning policy in respect of the proposals impact on design, neighbour amenity, highways and trees and biodiversity. This weighted neutrally in the overall planning balance.

Further to the above, it is accepted that the boundary treatment is necessary due to safeguarding reasons. The school has statutory safeguarding duties in regard to the students attending the school and employees. It is also accepted that the existing boundary treatment in parts does not meet the necessary safeguarding requirements. The need for the boundary treatment in regard to safeguarding is given substantial weight.

Taking the above into consideration, it is considered that the very special circumstances have been identified and that the very special circumstances would clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and therefore the development is considered to be acceptable in principle.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant subject to the following conditions:

Time Limits

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

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

Plans

2. This permission relates to the following plans:

- Location Plan Fencing. Drawing number: A2/ 2005433/005
- Block Plan. Drawing number: A2/ 2500433/013
- Existing Boundary Fencing With Gate Positions Plan. Drawing number: A2/ 2005433/006
- 2.4m High 358 V Beam Prison Mesh with 60x60mm Dig in Bay
- Proposed Boundary Fencing and Gate Position Plan. Drawing number: A2/ 2005433/007
- Double Gate Elevation. Drawing number: A2/ 2005433/009
- Single Gate Elevation. Drawing number: A2/ 2005433/008

and the development shall be carried out in complete accordance with these drawings hereby approved.

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

Tree Replacement

3. Prior to first use of the development, 4 replacement trees shall be planted within the application site. If the replacement trees are removed, dies, becomes severely damaged or seriously diseased within five years of planting, the trees shall be replaced by trees of a similar size and species.

Reason: To ensure that the site is satisfactorily landscaped having regard to its location and the nature of the proposed development and in accordance with policies P3, DM1, G6 and G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and a Tree Protection Plan((TPP)

4. Prior to the commencement of the hereby approved development (including site preparatory works), a scheme for the protection of the retained trees in accordance with BS 5837:2012, including Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and a Tree Protection Plan((TPP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details the AMS and TPP shall include but not be limited to:

- a) Locations of retained trees and root protection areas of these trees.
- b) A specification for protective fencing to safeguard retained trees during groundworks and construction phases and a plan indicating the location and alignment of the protective fencing.
- c) Specifications of signage clearly defining tree protection areas.
- d) Methods of ground clearance which may be required within the root protection areas (RPA as defined in BS 5837: 2012) of the retained trees
- e) Details of any required construction within the RPA or that may impact on the retained trees.
- f) A full specification for the installation of boundary treatment works which may affect trees.

- g) A methodology for Arboricultural site supervision and inspection by a suitably qualified tree specialist.
- h) An approach to reporting of inspection and supervision.

The development thereafter shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To safeguard the trees, and to conserve biodiversity value in accordance with Policies G6, G7, P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-G7 of the adopted Places for Everyone DPD and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: Protection measures for retained trees are required to be in place prior to commencement to ensure no damage is caused.

Procedure Statement