

Officer Report

Case Reference: 24/00560/FUL
Location: The Old Railway Yard, Fishwick Street, Rochdale
Proposal: Erection of a mixed use commercial unit consisting of vehicles sales, MOT and repairs, including office space (Use Class B2 and Sui Generis) and associated parking
Recommendation: Approve with Conditions
Officer: Majid Mir

SITE

The application relates to Unit 13 at Scotts Industrial Park. The site is being used as a mixed use development consisting general industrial use (Use Class B2) and HGV MOT station 23/01226/FUL. More specifically, the application relates to the

The site comprises a relatively large industrial style building that has been clad. It is noted that there is no planning permission related to installation of the cladding and this is not a consideration of this application.

The building faces southeast and is set a back a considerable distance from the highway. Within the site, the building is located in the southwestern corner of the site. The rest of the site is used as parking space. Fishwick Street drops away from south to north and therefore the north part of the site is set higher than Fishwick Street. A stone wall encloses the site along Fishwick Street and Milnrow Road.

To the northwest the site abuts the Calder Valley Train Line with a tree lined embankment providing separation between the site and the train lines. To the southwest of the site, the site adjoins a training centre along Fishwick Street and the Post Office building on Ainsworth Street. The surrounding area is predominantly industrial in nature and there are a number of industrial buildings in the locality, in particular along Fishwick Street.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks planning permission to construct a commercial unit sited to the northeast of the existing building within the wider unit. The building will be used for vehicles sales, MOT and repairs with ancillary office spaces (use class B2). The proposal also includes details associated parking within the site.

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-J1 Supporting Long-Term Economic Growth

JP-J2 Employment Sites and Premises

JP-J4 Industry and Warehousing Development

JP-S4 Flood Risk and the Water Environment

JP-C8 Transport Requirements of New Development

JP-C7 Freight and Logistics

JP-S1 Sustainable Development

JP-P2 Heritage

JP-G6 Urban Green Space

JP-G7 Trees and Woodland

JP-G8 A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Local

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

SO1 To deliver a more prosperous economy

E2 Increasing jobs and prosperity

E3 Focusing on economic growth corridors and areas

SO3 Improving design, image and quality of place

P3 Improving design of new development

SO4 Promoting a greener environment

G1 Tackling and adapting to climate change

G2 Energy and new development

G3 Renewable and low carbon energy developments

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

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

EM/7 Development and Flood Risk

EM/8 Protection of Surface and Ground Water

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

23/01226/FUL - Change of use from a Storage and Warehouse unit (Use Class B8) to General Industrial use (Use Class B2) and HGV MOT Station (Sui Generis) (Retrospective).

Decision: Grant subject to conditions.

85/D18163 - Haulage Storage Vehicle Maintenance And Container Depot With 3M. High Boundary Fence.

Decision: Approved.

85/D18616 - Haulage Storage Vehicle Maintenance And Container Depot With Office Accommodation (Revised Application).

Decision: Approved.

84/D17320 - Haulage Storage Vehicle Maintenance And Container Depot.

Decision: Approved.

81/D12464 - Renewal Of Planning Permission For Use Of Land As Rail Scrap Processing Depot.

Decision: Approved.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways And Engineering

We have no objections to this proposal we must however have proof the site can be safely serviced by vehicle transporters and request a condition is added to any consent given.

Highways 2

I was hoping for swept path analysis of a vehicle transporter this appears to be some sort of recovery vehicle.

Have they submitted for the larger multi vehicle transporter? We don't want one of these parked on Fishwick Street whilst loading and unloading.

Environmental Health – Noise/Odour

No objection.

Transport for Greater Manchester

The site in question is sufficiently remote from Metrolink operations with the Network Rail network situated between us and the site, we therefore have no comments to make with respects to this application.

Network Rail

Standing objection.

Following amendments – no objection.

Natural England

No comments received.

Gtr Manchester Ecology Unit

The only comment I would make is that it would be good to incorporate some ecological enhancement into the scheme, such as trees and shrubs designed into the parking and some roosting/nesting provision for bats and birds incorporated into the new building.

Environmental Control (Land Gas)

The report and recommendation for an investigation is acceptable. Recommend addition of Site Investigation and Assessment condition.

United Utilities

Noting this is a Full application, we request that the applicant provides a detailed drainage plan, and that United Utilities has the opportunity to review and comment on this plan PRIOR TO DETERMINATION of this application.

Should planning permission be granted without the provision of this information we request the following condition is attached to any subsequent Decision Notice:

CONDITION:

Prior to the commencement of development, details of a sustainable surface water drainage scheme and a foul water drainage scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage schemes must include:

- (i) An investigation of the hierarchy of drainage options in the National Planning Practice Guidance (or any subsequent amendment thereof). This investigation shall include evidence of an assessment of ground conditions and the potential for infiltration of surface water in accordance with BRE365;
- (ii) A restricted rate of discharge of surface water agreed with the local planning authority (if it is agreed that infiltration is discounted by the investigations);

(iii) Levels of the proposed drainage systems including proposed ground and finished floor levels in AOD;

(iv) Incorporate mitigation measures to manage the risk of sewer surcharge where applicable; and

(v) Foul and surface water shall drain on separate systems.

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

Prior to occupation of the proposed development, the drainage schemes shall be completed in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

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

Urban Design

There are no specific building design issues with this application. The site abuts railway land and is significantly elevated above the public highway atop a large retaining wall, thus restricting views from the public realm.

Concern is raised regarding the potential for vehicular and pedestrian conflict given the site access, which would appear to be shared with HGVs. This is a matter for consideration by the Highways Authority

The nature of any proposed replacement fencing atop the retaining wall should be carefully considered; what appears to be electric fencing would not be appropriate for a publically accessible facility should it be in reach of everyday users. Retention of the existing electric fencing should only be accepted if it is either double bounded or the site is made demonstrably safe for all site users.

Conservation

No comments but consult GMAAS

The application site lies adjacent to the mainline railway and is on the junction of Milnrow Road and Fishwick Street. The site formerly housed the Rochdale train station, as well as associated goods sheds and sidings. These have since been demolished and the site is now home to modern warehouses.

Given the modern context and the lack of survival of historic buildings, there are no comments on the application. However, GMAAS should be consulted given the potential for remains associated with the former railway station and buildings.

GMAAS

Having checked our records I am satisfied that the proposed development does not threaten the known or suspected archaeological heritage. The development of the railway yard can be well traced through cartographic and even photographic records. Whilst there is no dedicated consideration of potential historical or archaeological interests of the site within the application material, site development is referenced through the maps included in the Ground Investigation report, with borehole data indicating made ground (probable rail yard ballast).

The location of the proposed new building is over former rail lines, and whilst there may be remains of the yard below current hardstanding there is little that could be learned through archaeological study that would further our knowledge of this area. Development of the yard will also have removed any traces of earlier periods, likely to considerable depth.

On this basis there is no reason to seek to impose any archaeological requirements upon the applicant.

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS)

Guidance provided.

REPRESENTATIONS

The application was publicised by way of neighbour notifications and a site notice being placed within the vicinity of the site. No responses have been received.

Principle of Development

The application site is within the Defined Urban Area and Mixed Employment Zone as allocated under the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan. Under the supporting text for saved policy G/D/1 it is advised that wherever possible, new development should be located in the urban area so as to support urban regeneration and to protect the countryside. Saved policy EC/3 (which should be read in conjunction with Core Strategy Policies E2 and E3) advises that development related to uses such as business (B1) (now within Use Class E), general industry (B2), warehouse and distribution (B8), merchants and suppliers, sui generis uses relating to the motor trade and certain entertainment, leisure and tourism uses and retail uses will be permitted. Policy E2 of the Core Strategy relates to increasing jobs and prosperity and advises that the Council will promote the delivery of infrastructure relating to the sufficient supply of suitable land, buildings and infrastructure required to create and retain successful businesses.

Furthermore, the principle of a MOT Station and general industrial use has already been accepted on site through the approval of planning permission 23/01226/FUL. The proposed development would allow for the extension of the existing use on the site and would allow the site to be retained within the uses the UDP states should be permitted within a Mixed Employment Zone.

Overall, the proposal is considered acceptable in accordance with Policy E2 of the Core Strategy, EC/3 of the UDP, PfE and the NPPF.

Design

The proposed unit would be approximately 32.9m wide and 12.9m deep. The proposed unit would have shallow dual pitched gable roof design with the eaves set to a height of 6.9m and the ridge height set to 8.1m. The unit will have five bays with large shutters to access the open plan vehicle workshop.

The application form states that the elevations and roof will be constructed with light grey steel sheets, doors would be anthracite powder coated aluminium, and the shutters would be anthracite grey/. The plans also suggest that part of the elevation will be clad. Full details/samples of the materials have not been provided, as such, it is considered appropriate to include a condition requiring details/samples of the materials to be provided.

The application site is located within close vicinity of unit 12 (formerly Thomas Robinsons and Sons Ltd building) which is identified as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA). The proposed unit would be set a considerable distance away from the NDHA and would be sited within a larger unit that includes a similarly designed industrial unit. Furthermore, the unit is located in a mixed use employment zone. Additionally, it is noted that the structure would be set a considerably higher level than the public highway, however, it would be set back and would not be visible from Fishwick Street. Views of the building would be possible from the opposite side of railway, however that would be in the context of the mixed use employment and the neighbouring industrial units.

The proposed building would be in keeping with character of the area as an industrial and mixed employment zone. Additionally, the Conservation Officer has raised no objection to the proposal.

Subject to conditions, the proposed development would result in an acceptable standard of design. It is therefore considered that the proposal accords with Rochdale Core Strategy policies DM1 and P3, PfE and the NPPF.

Amenity

The site is sited next to the busy Milnrow road, located in an area surrounded with industrial uses and abuts the railway line. Additionally, it is noted that the existing use of the site is a storage and warehouse unit. Finally, residential properties are set a considerable distance away from the application site.

As such it is considered that proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on residential amenity. The proposal would accord with policy DM1 of the adopted Core Strategy, PfE and the NPPF.

Highways

The Council's Highways Department did not envisage that the proposed development would generate a significant volume of traffic. The highways department considered that there was adequate parking, however, it was noted that with any car sales pitch, the car parking is generally used as an extension of the showroom. Additionally, parking areas are also used for vehicles awaiting repairs. There is a concern that too many vehicles would threaten the safe function of the space. The site is however private and not highway. The highways department have advised that the applicant take this into considered and operate the site in a safe manner.

The highways department did raise concerns in regard to the servicing of the site by vehicle transporters. The highways department subsequently requested a swept path analysis showing how vehicles will be transported to and from this premises. TFGM noted that there should be sufficient manoeuvrability available within the site to ensure that all vehicles (including the largest intended vehicle) can enter and exit the site in a forward gear and turn on site, however, swept path plans should be provided to demonstrate this. A swept path analysis was subsequently provided; however, this appeared to be for smaller vehicles. It is however noted that the site is located within a mixed employment zone and there are no parking restrictions along Fishwick Street. Furthermore, it is noted that there is space within the site for manoeuvrability of larger vehicles.

As such, it is considered the proposal would comply with Policy T2 of the Rochdale Core Strategy, the PfE and the NPPF.

Drainage

Policy G8 requires that new development does not lead to any form of increased flooding or impeded natural water and flood risk management. In this regarding it is important that development includes drainage that is appropriate for the site and that utilised sustainable urban drainage solutions wherever possible. The site is not within an area at increased risk of flooding.

The site is located on higher ground than Fishwick Street. The site also adjoins a railway. No details of the drainage have been provided. United Utilities have requested the addition of pre-commencement condition requiring details of drainage details to provided with any approval.

Subject to the addition of the condition, the proposal would not have any unacceptable impact and would accord with Policy G8 of the Rochdale Core Strategy, the UDP, the PfE and the NPPF.

Biodiversity and Ecology

Paragraph 174 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.

Core Strategy policy G7 requires that no development should result in a net loss of biodiversity and geodiversity.

The application site is located within an SSSI Impact Risk Zone. The site possesses limited biodiversity within the site with foliage along the land on the opposite side of the boundary with the railway line. GMEU have raised no objection to the proposal. However, they have suggested that a condition is included requiring biodiversity enhancement on the site. GMEU have suggested that this can be done through the addition of trees and shrubs designed into the parking and/or roosting/nesting provision for bats and birds incorporated into the proposed building.

Noting that the proposed development would be sited close to the boundary and has the potential to impact on biodiversity along the boundary, it is considered appropriate to include a condition requiring details of biodiversity enhancement to be provided.

Subject to this condition, the proposal would not have any unacceptable impact on biodiversity and geodiversity and would accord with Policy G6 and G7 of the Rochdale Core Strategy, the PfE and the NPPF.

Land contamination

Core Strategy Policy G9 states that the Council will ensure that any risks arising from contaminated land or land instability are identified, and that any appropriate actions to address these risks are taken, prior to development taking place.

The application is supported by a Phase 1 (Preliminary Risk Assessment) report. The report identified a number of potential risks associated with contamination have been identified with respect to the proposed commercial development, including risks to human health, property and controlled waters. As such the report concluded that a Site investigation is required to determine shallow ground conditions and quantify the potential risks identified. Additionally, a Site investigation is also recommended to assess ground conditions to provide recommendations for foundation design.

Council's Land Contamination Officer agreed with the recommendations for investigation to take place and as such recommended the addition of a pre-commencement condition.

Subject to the addition of the condition, it is considered that the application would accord with adopted Rochdale Core Strategy policy G9, saved UDP policies EM/7 and EM/8, the PfE and the NPPF.

Railway

Network Rail raised concerns about the use of Network Land within the red edge. Network Rail also requested a 3m buffer is retained between any building/structures and the railway boundary, and to ensure the safe operation and integrity of the railway, Network Rail therefore requested the addition of conditions to protect the railway and its boundary.

Following discussions with Network Rail and amendments to the proposal, the objection was removed by Network Rail.

It is further noted that the applicant will still require approval from the Network Rail for elements of the work. It is considered appropriate to include an advisory requiring that the applicant contact Network Rail to apply for approval for the relevant work.

As such, there are no concerns regarding the application in this respect and the application accords with policy DM1.

Recommendation: Approve with Conditions

Condition(s) (8)

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

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

- 2 This permission relates to the following plans and documents:-

- New Build MOT and Sales Building. Drawing number: STE/03 - Dwg 01E. Received by email on 15/01/2026

- Swept Path Analysis. Drawing number: STE/03 - Dwg 03E. Received by email on 15/01/2026

- Location Plan (Existing Site Plan). Drawing number: STE/03 - Dwg 08. Received by email on 05/02/2026

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

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

- 3 No above ground works shall take place until details of the materials (including specifications and samples to be provided on site) to be used in the construction of the exterior of the development hereby permitted are submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory appearance in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with policies P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 4 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 shall include:

(i) An investigation of the hierarchy of drainage options in the National Planning Practice Guidance (or any subsequent amendment thereof). This investigation shall include evidence of an assessment of ground conditions and the potential for infiltration of surface water in accordance with BRE365;

(ii) A restricted rate of discharge of surface water agreed with the local planning authority (if it is agreed that infiltration is discounted by the investigations);

(iii) Levels of the proposed drainage systems including proposed ground and finished floor levels in AOD;

(iv) Incorporate mitigation measures to manage the risk of sewer surcharge where applicable; and

(v) Foul and surface water shall drain on separate systems.

The approved schemes shall also be in accordance with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (March 2015) or any subsequent replacement national standards. Prior to occupation of the proposed development, the drainage schemes shall be completed in accordance with the approved details and retained thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To promote sustainable development, secure proper drainage and to manage the risk of flooding and pollution. To prevent an increased risk of flooding as a result of the development and to ensure satisfactory disposal of surface water from the site in accordance with Policy G8 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-S4 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

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

- 5 No development shall take place until an investigation and risk assessment (in addition to any assessment provided with the planning

application) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The assessment shall investigate the nature and extent of any contamination on the site (whether or not it originates on the site). The assessment shall be undertaken by competent persons.

The submitted report shall include:

i) a survey of the extent, scale and nature of contamination

ii) an assessment of the potential risks to:

- human health,

- property (existing or proposed) including buildings, crops, livestock, pets, woodland, and service lines and pipes,

- adjoining land,

- groundwaters and surface waters,

- ecological systems,

- archaeological sites and ancient monuments;

iii) where unacceptable risks are identified, an appraisal of remedial options; and proposal of the preferred option(s) to form a remediation strategy for the site.

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

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

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

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

- 6 No above ground works shall take place until a scheme of biodiversity enhancements for the site including, but not limited to, the provision of bird boxes, bird bricks, bat boxes and bat bricks to be integrated to the

fabric of the buildings hereby approved, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The duly approved scheme shall be implemented in full prior to first operation of the building 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 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

7 No development shall take place until a Dust Management Plan (DMP), which shall include the following, has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

- a) Hoarding on site;
- b) loading and unloading of plant and materials;
- c) storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
- d) wheel washing facilities;
- e) measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction;
- f) a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from construction works;
- g) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities;
- h) measures for the protection of the natural environment from accidental spillages, dust and debris;

The approved DMP shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The development shall not be carried out otherwise than in accordance with the approved DMP without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To minimise detrimental effects to the neighbouring amenities and detriment to the environment through the risks of pollution during the construction phase in accordance with Policies DM1, P3, G8 and G9 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, policies JP-S1, JP-S2, JP-S5 and JP-C8 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: As the proposals require ground works and engineering works an understanding will therefore be necessary of what measures will be put in place to protect the amenity of nearby residents and the surrounding environment prior to commencement of any building or engineering works on site.

- 9 Prior to first occupation, a scheme to show the installation of electric vehicle charging points shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved vehicle charging points shall thereafter be installed prior to its occupation and retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure the provision of environmentally friendly technology to accord with the requirements of policies JP-S1, JP-S2 and JP-C8 of the of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Approval Reason(s) (1)

- 1 The Local Planning Authority worked proactively with the applicant to identify various solutions during the application process to ensure that the proposal comprised sustainable development and would improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area and would accord with the development plan. These were incorporated into the scheme and/or have been secured by planning condition.

Informatives (1)

- 1 As the proposal includes works which could impact the existing operational railway and in order to facilitate the above, a BAPA (Basic Asset Protection Agreement) will need to be agreed between the developer and Network Rail. The developer will be liable for all costs incurred by Network Rail in facilitating this proposal, including any railway site safety costs, possession costs, asset protection costs / presence, site visits, review and agreement of proposal documents and any buried services searches. The BAPA will be in addition to any planning consent.

Going forward in order for Network Rail to spend any time reviewing any submissions, provision of any asset information, attending any further meetings, assisting with discharging any planning conditions set etc, Network Rail will require the return of a signed BAPA (Basic Asset Protection Agreement) and relevant payment/ PO as noted in the estimate sent. Network Rail is a publicly funded entity and all outside party works, which these are, are cost recoverable as dictated to us by the ORR.

The local planning authority (LPA) are not responsible for the safe operation of the railway or our assets and the issues raised by the developer/applicant will ultimately need to be agreed by Network Rail engineering to ensure the proposed development does not interfere with the safety of the railway.

2 Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service have provided guidance for the applicant relating to access and facilities, provision of water supplies and fire hydrants. Please read the consultation response for further information and contact details.

3 United Utilities have provided guidance to the applicant. Please read the consultation response from United Utilities for further information and contact details.