

HERITAGE & CONSERVATION CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Application Details

Heritage, Conservation & Design team officer

Catherine Fenghour

Date

25 March 2026

Application reference

25/00496/FUL

Address

1 Castle Hill Crescent, Rochdale, OL11 4HZ

Proposal

Demolition of existing dwelling and construction of part two storey, part three storey building comprising 8no residential units with associated car parking and landscaping

Affected Heritage Assets

Designated heritage assets

- Castle Hill House (grade II)

Non-designated heritage assets

- The Castle Public House

Summary

The proposed development would cause some harm to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset. It would also result in a low level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the grade II listed. This would be due to the scale and massing of the proposed building and the visibility of the site from Castle Hill House. Its greater scale and massing would result in it competing for dominance in the streetscene with the identified heritage assets. The harm to Castle Hill House would be limited due to the extent to which its setting has already been eroded by 20th century development. Given the distance of separation and the intervening dual carriageway, it is not considered that the proposal would adversely affect the significance of Broadfield Park.

Assessment

Site description and significance

The application site is currently occupied by a mid-20th century bungalow. This property is not of architectural or historic interest.

The site was historically part of the wider grounds of the grade II listed Castle Hill House, built in 1820. It is built of ashlar stone, with a shallow hipped slate roof and has original sash windows, and a central pediment. The house would originally have been a high-status property, with associated formal grounds and an entrance to the south onto Manchester Road. The house was built on the site of the former Rochdale Castle and occupies a commanding position at the top of Castle Hill.

Opposite the site along Manchester Road is the former Castle Pub, which is currently being converted into apartments. This mock Tudor building has been identified as a non-designated heritage asset, noting its architectural interest and communal value.

Relevant legislation and planning policy

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 66(1) In considering whether to grant planning permission [...] for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority [...] shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2025)

Chapter 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Para 213 states that *“any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.”*

Paragraph 215 states that *“where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”*

The impact of a development on a non-designated heritage asset is also a material planning consideration. A balanced judgement should be had, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset (para 216).

At a local level, Places for Everyone (PfE) policy JP-P2 and Rochdale CS policy P2 relate to heritage.

Assessment of proposals

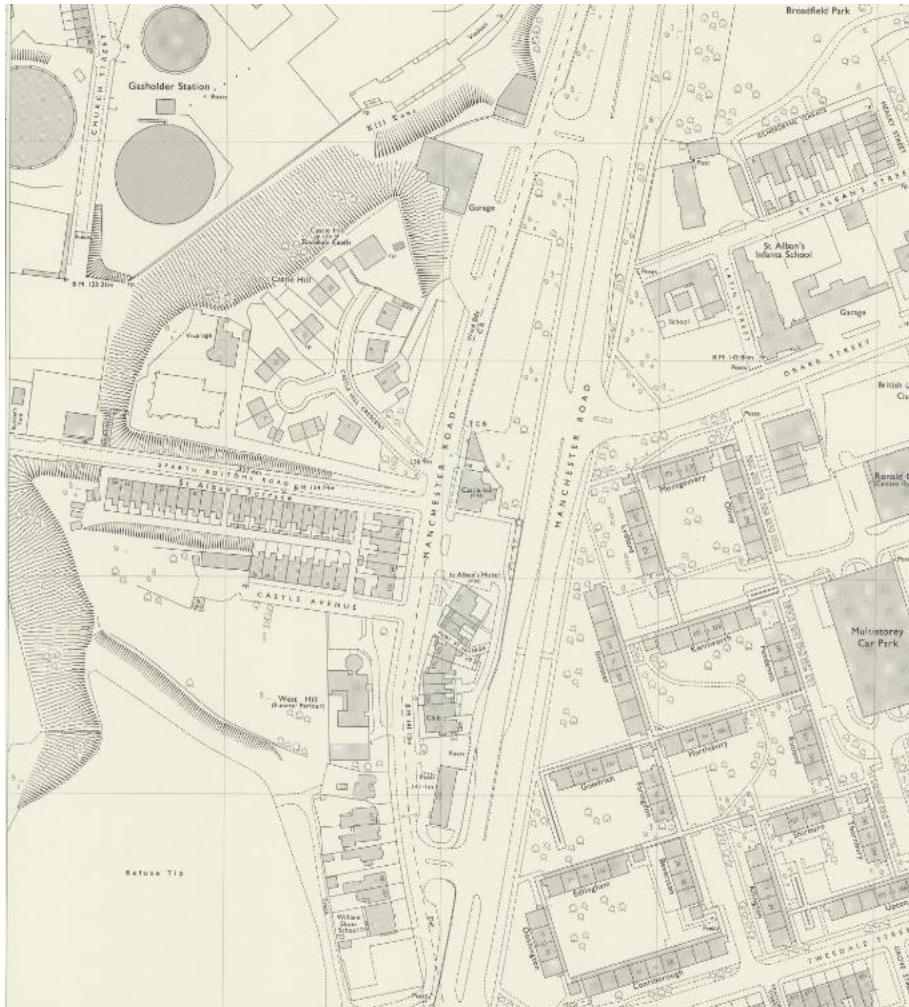
The proposal is for the demolition of the existing bungalow and the construction of a three-storey apartment block, comprising 8 units. The surrounding area is characterised by two storey semi-detached properties along Castle Crescent and terraced properties which are two storeys with rooms in the roof. While there are larger apartment buildings in the wider area, these are not in the immediate vicinity of the site and are not really part of the context in which the site is appreciated.

The levels rise from the site along Castle Crescent. The grade II listed Castle Hill House lies at the top of the Hill, on the site of the former Rochdale Castle. The submitted streetscene elevations indicate that the building would be substantially higher than the buildings along Manchester Road. However, as the levels rise along Castle Hill Crescent, the difference in heights would be less apparent. Nevertheless, the scale of the proposed apartment building would be substantially greater than that of the surrounding residential buildings. Its scale and mass would give it a discordant appearance within the streetscene.

The 1890s town plan shows that the site immediately to the south of the entrance to the grounds of the grade II listed Castle Hill House. It would appear to have been part of the woodland which surrounded the formal gardens. Historically, the entrance and approaches to the site would have been important in contributing to the status of the House.



The formal grounds of Castle Hill House appear to have been developed in the mid-20th century. Many of the houses along Castle Hill Crescent along with the bungalow on the application site are shown on the 1958 OS map and by the 1970s much of the area is largely as it is today:



The construction of the houses along Castle Hill Crescent have eroded much of the sense of approach. The junction from Manchester Road onto Castle Hill Crescent is no longer legible as the principal entrance into the grounds of Castle Hill House. There would be some intervisibility between the listed building, with the application site visible from the existing entrance to the listed building.

The only visible remnants of historic fabric at the entrance to Castle Hill Crescent are the coursed stone wall along St Albans Court and a single gate post. Given the presence of this existing development and the extent to which it has already eroded the historic grounds, it is considered that the proposed development would only have a minor adverse impact on the setting of the listed building. This would be as a result of its scale and massing and increased prominence within views from Castle Hill House. This harm to the listed building's significance would be less than substantial. This should be balanced against any public benefits stemming from the proposal.

The site lies immediately opposite the former Castle Inn Public House, which is being converted into apartments. This Arts and Crafts building has been identified as a non-designated heritage asset due to its architectural and communal interest. It is a prominent feature within its surroundings and on the approaches along Manchester Road. The bungalow which is currently on the application site has minimal visual impact on the setting of the non-designated heritage asset. Given the change in levels and the three-storey height of the proposal, it would have a greater visual impact and would

compete for dominance with the public house in views along Manchester Road. It is considered that the proposed development would result in some harm to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset, due to its size and scale. This is a material consideration in the planning balance.

If the officer is minded to approve the application, it is important that a high quality of materials and finishes are secured by condition. It is noted that the heritage statement says that a natural slate will be used, but the plans show a cement fibre slate product. Given the location of the site, it is important that a natural slate is used.

Conclusions

The proposed development would cause some harm to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset. It would also result in a low level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the grade II listed. This would be due to the scale and massing of the proposed building and the visibility of the site from Castle Hill House. Its greater scale and massing would result in it competing for dominance in the streetscene with the identified heritage assets. The harm to Castle Hill House would be limited due to the extent to which its setting has already been eroded by 20th century development. Given the distance of separation and the intervening dual carriageway, it is not considered that the proposal would adversely affect the significance of Broadfield Park.

Re-consultation

Yes, in event of changes to the proposal