

Officer Report

Case Reference: PL/2026/0089
Location: 679-681 MANCHESTER OLD ROAD, MIDDLETON,
MANCHESTER, M24 4GF
Proposal: Change of use of ground floor retail unit (Use Class E) to one self-contained flat (Use Class C3) demolition of existing extension and erection of single-storey rear extension and alteration to fenestration to front and rear elevations”
Recommendation: Refuse
Officer: Luke Rigby

SITE

The application site consists of a two-storey mid-terraced building located to the south of Manchester Old Road in a predominantly residential area of Middleton. The existing building is constructed of facing brick with a pitched roof. The ground floor of the building is in use as a convenience store (Use Class E) and is to which this application relates.

It appears that the building was previously two residential dwellings which were converted into one larger building, however there is no record of this.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks planning permission for the change of use of the ground floor to one self-contained apartment with 2No. bedrooms (Use Class C3) and associated external alterations including reinstatement of windows and entrance door. It is also proposed to demolish part of the existing rear extension and construction of a new rear extension.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

01/D38543 – Use Of Part Of Ground Floor Of Premises To Form Extended Retail Area Including Alterations To Front Elevation. Approve subject to conditions

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Sub Regional Guidance

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE):

Policy JP-S1 – Sustainable Development

Policy JP-P1 – Sustainable Places

Policy JP-H3 – Type, Size, and Design of New Housing

Local Guidance

Saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2006:

Policy G/D/1 – Defined Urban Area

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

Policy P3 – Improving design of new development

Policy DM1 – General development requirements

Policy C1 – Delivering the right amount of housing in the right places

Policy C3 – Delivering the right type of housing

Policy T2 – Improving accessibility

Appendix 5 Schedule of Parking Standards

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

Supplementary Planning Document ‘Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development’ (2016)

PUBLICITY

Site Notice: N/A

Press Notice: N/A

Neighbour notification letters: In accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement, notification letters were sent to immediate neighbours.

ASSESSMENT

Principle

Policy JP-H1 of The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan sets out an ambitious plan to deliver over 10,000 homes per year in Greater Manchester over the plan period 2022-2039. Policy C1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy outlines the Council's aim to deliver at least 460 dwellings per year until 2028.

The application site is located in a predominantly residential area and would provide 1No. additional self-contained dwelling, and would therefore make a positive contribution to meeting local and sub-regional targets in accordance with Policy JP-H1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (henceforth, PfE) and Policy C1 of the Core Strategy (henceforth, CS).

There are no constraints associated with the site that would preclude the presumption of sustainable development. Having regard to the above, it is considered that the principle of the change of use is acceptable in this instance subject to relevant assessment of other factors.

Design and Appearance

Amongst other things, at paragraph 135, the NPPF requires new development to be of a high standard of design which functions well and adds to the overall quality of an area; be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and landscaping; and, establish or maintain a strong sense of place.

Locally, CS policies P1 and P3 require all new developments, including associated landscaping, regardless of location in the borough, to adhere to high standards of design and goes on to list relevant design principles. Further to this, CS policy DM1 sets out general development requirements and details a list of criteria which all development proposals will be expected to demonstrate compliance, including the need for high quality design.

The application proposes the removal of the existing window to the front elevation of the building and reinstatement with 2No. windows and 1No. entrance door. These are considered acceptable changes and would not appear incongruous or out of character having regard to the fact that the existing building is a mid-terrace. The changes would contribute to reinstatement of the established flow of fenestrations across the terrace.

To the rear, it is proposed to demolish part of the existing single storey extension and construct a new single storey extension with mono-pitched roof and 1No. window. This is considered acceptable on design terms and would appear as a subservient and in proportion addition to the existing building. The reduction in built form over the existing situation would be a welcome change.

Having regard to the above, the proposed development is considered to accord with Policies P1, P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-P1 of the PfE Joint Development Plan, and the design guidance of the Housing SPD and NPPF.

Amenity

Future Occupiers

The application proposes to create a self-contained apartment which would comprise of 2No. bedrooms, a large living/dining area, a kitchen, and a separate bathroom. The apartment would have its own access door and would be separate from the first floor of the building which would retain its own access door.

Policy JP-H1 requires that all new dwellings provide amenity space in line with the Governments Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS). Paragraph 4.1(iii) of the housing SPD states that a minimum of 10m should be retained between a principal window and a single storey extension which does not feature a habitable window.

The NDSS requires that for a dwelling providing 2No. bedspaces, at least one of these must be a double (or twin) room with a floor area of 11.5sqm and be 2.75sqm wide (any double or twin room thereafter may be 2.55sqm wide).

For a single room, this must have a floor area of 7.5sqm and be at least 2.15sqm wide to be considered a bedroom.

The floor plan and application form indicate that the dwelling would provide 2No. bedrooms. One of these would be a double room providing 12.4sqm of floor space and would have width in excess of the requirements and would therefore be in accordance with the NDSS.

Notwithstanding this, however, Bedroom 2 would provide only 6.9sqm of floor space and would therefore be contrary to the requirements of the NDSS. It would therefore fail to provide an acceptable level of amenity for future occupiers of this room.

In addition, Bedroom 2 would be served by a single window which sited adjacent to the single-storey kitchen extension at a separation distance of approximately 2 metres. This limited separation would result in a poor level of outlook for future occupiers and would fall contrary to Paragraph 4.1(iii) of the housing SPD.

Having regard to the above, the proposed development, by virtue of failure to comply with the Nationally Described Space Standards and lack of sufficient separation outlook from the provided window, would fail to provide an acceptable level of amenity for future occupiers and would therefore fall contrary to Policy JP-H1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, Policy DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, and the guidance of the housing SPD.

Neighbouring Dwellings

The propose development is not considered to have a detrimental impact on the amenity that neighbouring dwellings can reasonably expect to enjoy. The development would feature marginal external changes to the front elevation. To the rear, the extension would have a reduced projection over the existing extension and whilst it would have a higher ridge height, this in itself is not considered to appear significantly overbearing or overshadowing for neighbouring dwellings.

Highways and Parking

Paragraph 116 of the NPPF states that a development should only be refused on highway grounds if the cumulative impact on the highway network, after mitigation, would be severe.

Locally, Appendix 5 of the Core Strategy requires that a 2 bedroom dwelling provide 2No. off-street parking spaces.

The proposed development would make no provision for parking. Notwithstanding, it is acknowledged that Manchester Old Road is a busy through road and parking restrictions are in force indicated by the provision of double yellow-lines along the road and the neighbouring streets. It is therefore not considered that the proposed development would give rise to any unacceptable parking. It is also pertinent to note that there are railings immediately outside the application site which would prevent on-street parking.

There are several bus stops along Manchester Old Road which would provide opportunity to use public transport and reduce the reliance on car travel.

The Council's Highway Department were consulted on the proposal and raise no objection to the development. Having regard to the above, whilst the representation received regarding parking is acknowledged, the proposed development is not considered to have a significantly detrimental impact on parking provision in the area or on the safe operation of the highway network

RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE

SUMMARY OF THIRD-PARTY REPRESENTATIONS

1No. objection received which can be summarised as follows:

- Concerns regarding no parking provision being made for the occupants
- Parking is difficult already for residents

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways Department: No objection

PROCEDURAL STATEMENT

Article 35 Declaration

Officers have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the planning application. No significant problems have arisen during the consideration of this application, and the application has been determined in a timely manner, in accordance with the policies with the Development Plan.

Human Rights and Public Sector Equality Duty

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been taken into account in the processing of the application and the preparation of this report. In particular, Article 6 (1), of the European Convention on Human Rights in relation civil rights and a fair hearing; Article 8 of the ECHR in relation to the right to respect for private and family life and Article 1 Protocol 1 of the ECHR in relation to the protection of property have all been taken into account.

In addition, the Equality Act 2010 provides protection from discrimination in respect of certain protected characteristics namely: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, or beliefs and sex and sexual orientation. It places the Local Planning Authority under a legal duty to have due regard to the advancement of equality in the exercise of its powers including planning powers. Officers have taken this into account in the assessment of the application. In particular due regard has been afforded to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and

- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Officers are satisfied that the application material and Officers' assessment has taken into account these issues.

The application has been considered in accordance with the Rochdale Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy – Embracing All Voices (2024-2026), which seeks to promote a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion that benefit the community as a whole.

Recommendation: Refuse

Refusal(s) (1)

- 1 By virtue of the inadequate internal floor space of Bedroom 2 and limited outlook from its sole habitable window, the proposed development would fail to provide an acceptable level of amenity for future occupiers. The proposed development therefore falls contrary to Policy JP-H4 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, Policy DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Paragraph 4.1(iii) of the housing SPD, and the National Planning Policy Framework.