

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
22/01279/FUL	Claire Ringwood	9 th June 2023

Address: Mecca Bingo, Smith Street, Rochdale, OL16 1YH

Proposal: Change of use from Bingo Hall to Indoor Sports Complex/Gym with retention of existing bar/restaurant facilities

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

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

RECOMMENDATION	GRANT
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: RG

DATE: 23 June 2023

SITE

The application site relates to the former Mecca Bingo Hall located to the east of Number One Riverside and close to the junction with John Street. The River Roch runs to the south of the site. The building is a large, part single storey part two storey brick building with an internal measurement of 2,800sqm. The building is currently vacant after closing in July 2022. The building has an irregular shape including some curved corner features along with a flat roof.

The building is located in Rochdale Town Centre and falls within Flood Zone 3.

PROPOSAL

The application proposes the change of use of the now vacant Mecca Bingo Hall (Sui Generis) to an indoor sports and fitness centre (Use Class E (d)) including football, cricket and gymnasium uses and ancillary cafe. There are no external alterations with only internal alterations proposed.

Four football pitches are proposed within the building which include three of the same size and a larger pitch measuring 20m x 13m and 26m x 16.9m respectively. The submitted Design and Access Statement states the size and layout of the pitches would be sufficient to enable small-sided football games to take place. Also proposed are four practice cricket lanes, a gymnasium and a small running track.

The display of signage would be the subject of separate advertisement consent.

The application form states the proposed facilities would operate from 6am to 11pm Monday to Saturday and 9.30am to 5pm Sunday and Bank Holidays.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

- E1 Establishing thriving town, district and local centres
- E1/R Establishing Rochdale as a thriving town centre
- C8 Improving community, sport, leisure and cultural facilities
- P3 Improving Design of New Development
- G8 Managing water resources and flood risk
- G9 Reducing the impact of pollution, contamination and land instability
- T2 Improving Accessibility
- DM1 General Development Requirements

Saved Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

- G/D/1 Defined Urban Area
- G/R/1 Physical Regeneration
- RE/4 Areas of Opportunity
- R/4(e) Riverside Area of Opportunity, Rochdale
- G/S/1 Hierarchy and Role of Centres
- S/5 Development Elsewhere in Town Centres
- G/LT/1 Sport Leisure and Tourism

Supplementary Planning Documents

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

77/D05773 – New supermarket with warden housing and car parking. Approved 31/01/1978.

95/D31919 – Change of use from retail store (Class A1) to Bingo and Leisure Club (Class D2). Approved 03/08/1995.

95/D32022 - Two Storey Extension To Existing Premises And External Alterations. Approved 03/08/1995.

95/D32522 – Erection of entrance canopy. Approved 20/11/1995.

07/D48546 – Smoking shelter extension to side of premises. Approved 01/03/2007.

12/55873/ADV – Installation of one, replacement, non-illuminated fascia sign to Smith Street elevation of premises. Two internally illuminated, wall mounted, poster signs to entrance and addition of two internally illuminated lettering signs to existing signs over entrance. Approved 08/10/2012.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Environment Agency

The emergency evacuation/access and egress plan provided in the FRA should be checked with and approved by the LPA's emergency coordinators.

Highways and Engineering

The application site is in a very sustainable location within the defined town centre with excellent access to public transport and local amenities.

From a highways impact perspective we would compare the previous use with the proposed use and both uses are very similar in terms of traffic generation, traffic patterns and parking demand. The site would appear to have operated without issue over many years and we would not expect that the proposed use would have any undue impact on the surrounding highway network.

The town centre has extensive car parking provision with a large car park surrounding the application site most of which is pay and display operating between 8:00am and 6:00pm. We would say that there is parking capacity around the application site to accommodate any parking generated by the proposed use.

The proposed servicing arrangements as shown on the submitted plans would appear to be acceptable

We would not expect that the proposed development would have any impact on road safety or highway capacity.

Highways raise no objection to this application and request no specific planning conditions.

Drainage & Flooding Officer

No objection subject to a condition.

Environmental Protection

The following are required to be completed:

- the inclusion of sustainable building methods and an assessment of use of solar panels;
- the installation of Electric Vehicle Charging Points at all new non-residential buildings undergoing renovation with more than 20 car parking spaces are to install at least one charge point. These charge points must have a minimum power rating output of 7Kw and fitted with a universal socket that can charge all types of electric vehicles currently on the market and meet safety and accessibility requirements. These charge points must be at least mode 3 or equivalent.

Greater Manchester Police

All crime prevention comments and recommendations to the physical fabric of the building have been made in the Crime Impact Statement (CIS report), covering the proposals.

In addition to the above recommendations and given the site location and building Use Design for Security would support a planning condition to meet Secured by Design certification, ensuring that any required upgrade and security measures highlighted in the CIS are incorporated into the completed redevelopment.

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service

The proposal should meet the requirements for Fire Service access, in accordance with Approved Document B Volume 2 [*Officer Note: this consultation has been sent to the applicant*].

REPRESENTATIONS

Letters of notification were sent to surrounding neighbours and a notice displayed in the vicinity of the site, 3 letters of representation have been received, 1 of which is supportive, 1 of which objects, and 1 of which is a neutral representation. The matters raised in these representations are summarised as follows:

1. The development looks exciting in terms of indoor sports provision;
2. Great addition to the town;
3. There will be a negative impact on other local gyms in the area; and
4. Other than one football pitch the proposal does not provide facilities that meet Sport England recommendations for minimum sizes and cannot be taken into account when looking at the overall sports provision across the borough.

ANALYSIS

Principle of use

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF identifies a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay. Paragraph 92 of the NPPF also requires that '*planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which.....c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for*

example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.'

Policy G/S/1 – Hierarchy and Role of Centres states that the main town centre should be promoted as the principal location for shopping, offices, commercial uses, entertainment, leisure, cultural and community facilities.

The application site lies within the town centre but is not identified as within Primary, Secondary or Central Shopping Areas.

Core Strategy Policy E1: Establishing thriving town, district and local centres states that *'we will focus retail, leisure, cultural, office, residential and other development to promote the viability and vitality of all the boroughs town centres to maintain them as thriving and sustainable centres'*. In addition Policy E1 seeks to promote a scale of retail and leisure development within Rochdale Town Centre which is appropriate to their size and catchment.

The application site also falls within the Rochdale Town Centre East Area Framework. One of the principles of this Framework is to *'encourage an improved mix of complementary uses in the town centre including retail, leisure, cultural, restaurants/cafes, housing and public facilities.'*

Policy E2: Increasing jobs and prosperity seeks to ensure a sufficient supply of employment land within the borough and supports other employment generating uses such as retail, leisure, entertainment and tourism uses to support the creation and retention of successful businesses.

Policy C8 – Improving community, sport, leisure and cultural facilities seeks to ensure that the provision of better community, sport, leisure and cultural facilities are supported and promoted.

Policy is clear that leisure facilities should preferably be located in town centres and Rochdale town centre specifically as a priority. As the site falls within the town centre, it is considered that the proposed use satisfies Policy E1.

Further to the above, the site lies close to an established shopping location with good access for pedestrians and vehicles, good public transport access, and is linked well with the local road networks. It would bring a vacant site back into use in the town centre.

A concern has been raised with regards to the impact on other local leisure facilities however, the location of the proposal is in line with policy designation and does not require consideration of impact as it is considered to support the vitality and viability of the town centre. A further concern has been raised with regards to the size of the proposed pitches and facilities which in most instances do not meet the Sport England requirements for formal indoor football and cricket facilities. The proposed use is as a recreational facility within the town centre. Whilst it may have limited use for formal sports it would still support active recreation and healthy lifestyles in line with development plan policy.

On this basis, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Policies C8, E1 and E2 of the adopted Core Strategy, Policy G/S/1 of the saved UDP, the NPPF and the Rochdale Town Centre East Area Framework SPD.

Amenity

Policy DM1 of the Core Strategy sets out a number of basic planning considerations that apply to all development which includes demonstrating that developments, including changes of use, minimise opportunities for crime against people or property. Further to this, paragraph 130 f) of the NPPF, advises that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments: *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.*

Policy G9 of the Core Strategy states that the Council will reduce all forms of pollution in the borough by, amongst others, requiring that final development does not lead to an unacceptable increase in air, water, noise, light or other pollution.

There are no proposed external changes to the building and it is considered that the location within Rochdale Town Centre is such that the proposed use would not result in any detriment to the amenity of any sensitive uses. The site is a sufficient distance from any residential properties and the use proposed would not cause any noise and disturbance, over and above the previous use at the site. The submitted Planning Application states that the opening hours would be 6am to 11pm Monday to Saturday and 9.30am to 5pm Sunday and Bank Holidays. Due to its location officers do not consider it necessary to restrict the hours of opening in this instance.

A Crime Impact Assessment has been submitted with the application which has identified a number of areas where changes are needed, and recommendations made, to reduce the opportunities for crime and the fear of crime. The assessment confirms the development is broadly acceptable in terms of designing out crime however, recommendations such as 1) the service areas to the rear of the building should be upgraded; 2) lockers should be provided for customers; 3) areas of the building highlighted in section 3.3.3 should be addressed where possible; and 4) physical security, CCTV, lighting and access control into and around the building are noted.

Greater Manchester Police – Design for Security have been consulted and advised that given the recommendations made in the Crime Impact Assessment, the location of the site and the proposed use, a planning condition is recommended to ensure that Secured by Design certification is met. Some of the recommendations relate to external alterations to the building. As the application is for a change of use only, there is not considered to be any greater impact on security than the previous use. The remaining matters are detailed internal arrangements dealing with matters such as lockers, CCTV etc. and are not directly related to planning.

To ensure that an alternative use of the premises, which falls under the same use class, is not implemented at a later date, officers consider removing permitted development rights is appropriate in this instance. This is to ensure that the LPA can assess the impact of any alternative use on highway safety, residential amenity and the impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre. A condition removing permitted development rights for such changes is considered necessary.

With relevant conditions in place, it is considered that the proposed leisure use is appropriate on the site and the application would accord with Policies DM1 and G9 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF.

Highway safety

Policy T2 of the Core Strategy acknowledges that development that offers greater access for all forms of travel will assist the borough's continuous improvement to

becoming more sustainable, healthier, greener and prosperous. Development and infrastructure proposal are required to satisfy the Council's accessibility hierarchy and in all circumstances, the safety, accessibility and amenity of those who live or have business in the area will have priority, while providing reliable journey times for those travelling through.

Paragraph 111 of the NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

The application site is in a very sustainable location within the defined town centre with excellent access to public transport and local amenities. The Council's Highways Officer has not raised any objections to the scheme which would, in terms of traffic generation, be very similar to the previous use. There is sufficient car parking provision close by and the proposed servicing arrangements as shown on the submitted plans would appear to be acceptable.

Although no cycle parking is shown on the submitted plans, the submitted Design and Access Statement advises that an existing covered smoking shelter at the rear of the building could be adapted for cycle storage. Taking into account the sustainable location of the application site, cycle parking would be a benefit to the scheme and this matter can be dealt with by way of condition.

Environmental Protection have requested the addition of EV charging points and solar panels however, there are only 12 car parking spaces within the application site, surrounding car parking areas are pay and display and are not within the applicants control. As the application is for a change of use only, it is not considered reasonable to request the addition of these in this particular instance.

The application is therefore acceptable in terms of access and highway safety and accords with the above policies.

Flood Risk and Drainage

A site-specific flood risk assessment should be provided for all development in Flood Zones 2 and 3. Paragraph 168 of the NPPF states that *'applications for some minor development and changes of use should not be subject to the sequential or exception tests but should still meet the requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments.'*

Policy G8 of the Core Strategy ensures that new development does not lead to any form of increased flooding locally or further downstream, does not impede natural water and flood risk management, is not detrimental to existing or potential flood storage areas, contributes where possible to alleviating existing flood risk, is itself well protected from flood risk and ensures prudent use of water resources.

The site is located in Flood Zone 3 which the Environment Agency consider is an area that has a high probability of flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment has been submitted as part of the application. The River Roch is located approximately 15m away from the application site.

The Flood Risk Assessment concludes that *'subject to the proposed mitigation measures, the site can be developed in accordance with the provisions of the NPPF and the requirements of the Environment Agency and the local planning authority. It is proposed that a formal Flood Warning and Emergency Response Plan is developed for the proposed development to communicate flood emergency response procedures to all the occupants of the site. This report demonstrates that the*

proposal will be safe, in terms of flood risk, for its design life and will not increase the flood risk elsewhere.'

In assessing the flood risk faced by the proposed change of use, consultation has been carried out with the Environment Agency who raised no objection in principle but advised that the emergency evacuation/access and egress plan provided in the FRA should be checked with and approved by the LPA's emergency coordinators. The Council's Drainage & Flooding Officer raised no objection subject to a condition requiring a) a flood warning and emergency response plan; and b) information on the material measures to be undertaken by the Developer in re-developing the building with specific reference to any measures suggested in Section 6 – Flood Protection measures indicated in the Flood Risk Assessment.

The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policy G8 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT subject to the following conditions:

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:-

Location Plan received 12/01/2023

Bin Store received 16/01/2023

Drawing No: PL01 – Proposed GF Plan received 22/02/2023

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 adopted Rochdale Unitary Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. Prior to the commencement of development, details of the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:-
 - (i) A Flood Warning and Emergency Response Plan
 - (ii) Information on the materials measures to be undertaken by the Developer in re-developing the building with specific reference to any measures suggested in Section 6 – Flood Protection measures indicated in the Flood Risk Assessment by RIDA dated Feb 2023, reference 486 FRA-001.

Reason: To promote sustainable development, and to manage the risk of flooding, in accordance with Policy G8 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, saved Policy EM/7 of the adopted Rochdale Unitary Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Reason for pre-commencement condition: Flood protection measures should be designed into the building alterations at the design stage, before building works is undertaken.

4. Prior to first occupation, a plan showing that the provision of secure cycle parking spaces can satisfactorily be provided on site shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The cycle parking spaces shall be provided in full accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation and thereafter kept free of obstruction and retained in accordance with the approved details and shall remain available for the parking of cycles at all times.

Reason: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in order to encourage travel by sustainable alternatives to private vehicle in accordance with Policy T2 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy.

5. Prior to first occupation of the development hereby approved, the refuse and recycling storage facility shall be implemented fully in accordance with those details shown on the approved plans and thereafter retained for use by occupiers of the dwelling/building at all times.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area and to ensure that bins can be easily accessed when required in accordance with Policies T2 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy.

6. Notwithstanding the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification), the premises shall be used for an indoor sports complex/gym only and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in the same Use Class of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification).

Reason: Another alternative use of the premises which may otherwise be permitted by virtue of the above Orders could be harmful to highway safety, residential amenity or the town centre in accordance with Policies C8, E1 and E2 of the adopted Core Strategy, Policies G/S/1 and S/5 of the saved UDP, the NPPF and the Rochdale Town Centre East Area Framework SPD.

Procedure Statement

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.

Notes for Applicant:

1. The applicant is advised that the display of any signage would be the subject of separate advertisement consent.