

APPLICATION NUMBER: 23/00769/FUL

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
23/00769/FUL	Rosalind Gralton	21 August 2023

Address: Sparth Community Centre Norman Road Rochdale OL11 4HS

Proposal: Temporary change of use of vacant community centre (use class F2) to use class F1 for the period of 3 years

PUBLICITY	Weekly list expired?	Y	Site notice expired?	Y
	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/A
	Neighbour comments received?	N

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

RECOMMENDATION	APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: LA

DATE: 02.10.23

SITE

The site relates to a vacant single storey L shaped building formerly used as Sparth Community Centre. The building is served by a car park and access is from Norman Road to the east. To the south and west is a playground and greenspace. To the south and north are residential properties, while a Car Showroom is located further East.

The site is within Flood Zones 2 and 3, and is within the Defined Urban Area.

PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for temporary change of use of vacant community centre (use class F2) to use class F1, for the period of 3 years.

The proposal would look to relocate the Local Studies and Archives collection for Rochdale Borough for a temporary period, while the Touchstones public building is under renovation.

Appointments can be made by the public to view the information available, which includes maps, plans, photographs, cemetery records, wills, census returns, parish records, trade directories, historical burgess rolls and newspapers, electoral registers, books pamphlets and articles.

The centre will be used to store facilities for the collection and a number of desks and workstations to facilitate operation of the service within the building.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

SO2 Creating successful and healthy communities

C7 Delivering education facilities

SO3 Improving design, image and quality of place

P1 Improving image

P3 Improving design of new development

SO5 Improving accessibility and delivering sustainable transport

T2 Improving accessibility

DM1 General development requirements

SD1 Delivering sustainable development

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

None recent or relevant

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Drainage

The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment as the site is within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The LLFA drainage engineer has no objections.

Highways And Engineering

The Council's Highway's Engineer was consulted on the application and their response is provided below:

'The application site is close to Rochdale Town Centre and has good links to public transport we therefore raise no concerns regarding the proposed parking provision.

The servicing of the existing building and its use would be similar to the proposed use so we raise no concern on this issue.

If approved the development should not have any impact on road safety or highways capacity on the wider highway network.

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

Env Health - Noise/Odours

No comments received to date

Tree Officer

No comments received to date

Conservation And Design

No comments received to date

REPRESENTATIONS

In line with the Council's Publicity, a site notice was posted and neighbours were notified. No responses were received.

ANALYSIS

The application site is allocated as Defined Urban Area under the Rochdale Unitary Development Plan. Policy G/D/1 is therefore relevant to any applications on the site and in the supporting text to this policy it is established that new development should be located in the urban area, so as to support urban regeneration and to protect the countryside.

Policy C7 of the adopted Core Strategy states that Improving education and skills is a high priority in order to improve productivity, social and community cohesion and the overall prosperity and quality of life in the borough. Paragraph 93 of the NPPF states *'To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should: a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of*

communities and residential environments; [...] c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;'

With the above policies in mind, it is considered that subject to the appropriate assessment of matters such as amenity, highway safety and the environment, the principle of the development of a change of use to a learning and non-residential institution, for the display of public records for a temporary period of time, would safeguard against the temporary loss of essential community services, and provide benefits wider community and is therefore acceptable.

Character and Appearance

No external changes are proposed to the building or hardstanding, and therefore it is not considered the proposal would result any detrimental impact to the character and appearance of the building or the surrounding area.

Impact on Amenity

Policy DM1 of the Adopted Core Strategy sets out a number of basic planning considerations that apply to all developments. Further to this, Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework seeks to ensure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users.

The application proposes no built form which would threaten to unduly overshadow, or be overbearing upon the windows and outdoor amenity spaces of adjacent properties, and no concerns are therefore had in this regard. The proposed use would make similar use of all existing rooms within the building, and proposes no alteration to, or addition of window openings, and it is considered that the change of use would not unduly impact the privacy of surrounding occupiers, despite the relatively close proximity of surrounding buildings.

Flood risk and drainage

The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment as the site is within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The LLFA drainage engineer has no objections. It was not necessary to consult the Environment Agency as the proposed development is minor in nature.

Highways

Policy T2 of the adopted Core Strategy seeks to improve accessibility by locating development where good access to public transport is available or can be provided and in all circumstances, prioritises the safety, accessibility and amenity of those who live or have business in the area. Policy DM1 also states that all development proposals should provide satisfactory vehicular access with adequate parking, manoeuvring, and servicing arrangements taking into account of the proposed use and location. Paragraph 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

The local highways authority have reviewed the application and raise no concerns, given the similarity of the existing and proposed uses. No concerns have been raised

to this regard. The proposal would comply with Policy T2 and DM1 of the Rochdale CS and relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

Accordingly, it is considered that the proposed change of use would have an acceptable impact on the residential amenity of surrounding occupiers and would accord with the requirements of Policy DM1 of the adopted Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

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:

- ☐ Existing and Proposed Site Plan – 23048464/03
- ☐ Existing Layout – Drawing A
- ☐ Location Plan
- ☐ Proposed Layout - 23048464/01 Rev A

and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings 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. The use of the building hereby approved, shall be discontinued on or before 2 October 2026 and restored to its previous use - Use Class F2.

Reason: In accordance with Policies P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework, as building's use is temporary, to protect essential assets.

Procedure Statement

The proposal complies with the development plan and would improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. It therefore comprises sustainable development and the Local Planning Authority worked proactively to issue the decision without delay.

Report Author Rosalind Galton