

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
24/00524/FUL	Hamish Rigg	23/07/2024

Address: 226 Rochdale Road, Milnrow, Rochdale, OL16 3BN

Proposal: Installation of roller shutters to front elevation and alterations to shop front - retrospective

PUBLICITY	Weekly list expired?	Y	Site notice expired?	n/a
	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
	Neighbour comments received?	y

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	Refuse
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: RK

DATE: 29/07/2024

SITE

The application relates to 226 Rochdale Road, a two-storey end of terrace commercial property in Firgrove, Rochdale. Rochdale Road (A640) is a main road connecting Rochdale town centre with Milnrow, and therefore accommodates plenty of traffic. Adjacent to the site are several commercial properties including hot food takeaways, shops, and businesses. The wider area is typically suburban, comprising terraced and semi-detached housing, playing fields, Kingsway Retail Park, and various public amenities.

No. 226 sits at the western end of a long row of terraced houses, on the junction with West Street to the west. It is adjoined by no. 224 to the east. No. 226 faces south, fronting the pavement and overlooking the public highway. The rear boundary of the curtilage faces north and borders with no. 1 West Street.

The site is currently occupied by 'Malik's Mini Mart' which is understood to provide general convenience retailing.

PROPOSAL

Permission is sought retrospectively for the removal of the existing front canopy, the installation of external roller shutters, and a new shop surround and front door in red. The shop surround consists of metal cladding displaying advertisements and signage, positioned above the ground floor window and door.



RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

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

Sub-Regional

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE)

The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan was adopted and became part of the statutory development plan for each of the 9 authorities covered by the plan on 21st March 2024. The following policies are relevant:

JP-P1 Sustainable places

JP-C5 Streets for all

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

SD1 Delivering sustainable development

DM1 General development requirements

SO3 Improving design, image and quality of place

P1 Improving image

P2 Protecting and enhancing character, landscape and heritage

P3 Improving design of new development

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

Supplementary Planning Documents:

Shop Fronts and Security Shutters SPD (2012, updated 2017)

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

N/A

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Urban design 21/06/2024:

The external roller shutters and shutter housing in this location are considered to be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. Existing local examples of external roller shutters & projecting shutter housing provide no justification for further harmful development.

The red colour treatment of the installation to suit a prospective operator is not a material planning consideration that carries any positive weight.

Should a potential Post Office use come forward, external shutters could potentially be considered acceptable, subject to detail, given the additional security considerations required by such uses. The applicant must be able to justify this as per the provisions of the adopted Shopfronts & Roller Shutters SPD. However, the shutter housing must be incorporated into the fabric of the building.

A traditional shopfront would be a more appropriate design choice in this particular location.

REPRESENTATIONS

Letters of notification were sent to surrounding properties 13/06/2024; one objection was raised relating to the following:

- *The property now looks out of character with other businesses & properties in the area.*
- *It looks an eyesore with all the shutters, cage, colour and adverts and harms the visual amenity of the area.*
- *Negative impact on local house prices*

Officer's response:

The first two points will be addressed in the design section of this report. The third point is not a material planning consideration.

PROCEDURAL NOTE

It is understood that a number of advertisements have been displayed on the shopfront. This application will only consider the operational development associated with the shopfront. It is noted that no application has been received for an advertisement consent and such features may be subject to enforcement proceedings as necessary.

ANALYSIS

Design: DM1 and P3

When read collectively, the NPPF, policies P3 and DM1 of the Core Strategy, and JP-P1 of Places for Everyone seek to achieve development of high quality design, by respecting context where it is positive and having regard to the scale, density, massing, height, layout, landscape, materials and access of surrounding buildings and areas in general. Development should function well and add to the overall quality of an area by being visually attractive as a result of effective architecture, layout and landscaping. NPPF Paragraph 139 is clear that development which is not well-designed should be refused.

To support the assessment of shopfronts and associated security features, the Council has adopted a Shop Fronts and Security Shutters SPD (2012, updated 2017) (the *SPD* hereafter). Whilst there have been significant changes to the NPPF since its original adoption in respect of design, such changes only place additional weight on the quality of the design of the proposals and as such its contents remain relevant and are afforded significant weight in the overall planning balance.

Planning Permission is sought retrospectively for the removal of the canopy to the front elevation, and the installation of a red metal shop front surround, a red front door, and an external roller shutter to the front elevation.

Prior to works taking place, the application property included a relatively modest shopfront, with traditional qualities and limited articulation featuring only a stallriser, doorway and a canopy. Vertically proportioned fenestration included surrounds and the rendered finish matched that of other properties in the terrace. Notwithstanding, the previous appearance of the building provided a subtle form of interest within the

townscape. The overall qualities of the shopfront are not dissimilar to other more traditionally designed shopfronts within the vicinity, although it is acknowledged that some of these do incorporate roller shutters, the visual harm arising from such features is clear.

The SPD provides a plethora of guidance on the design of shopfronts and sets out that where existing shopfronts already contribute effectively to the character of their location, the Council will normally expect their retention and restoration.

The red colour treatment of the metal shopfront/rollershutter installation is of a conspicuously low-quality and reads as an incongruous feature within the street scene.

Further concern is raised in respect of the roller shutters as no details have been provided to demonstrate their appearance when closed. It is assumed that the shutters would take a typical appearance of a solid metal roller shutter which would inflict additional harm outside of trading hours, or if the business were to cease trading for any period of time.

Overall, the works to the shopfront are considered to fall well-short of the design quality expected by local and national policy and guidance; the obscuration of traditional features, use of a low-quality, bulky and highly incongruous solution has clearly give rise to significant adverse impacts to the character and appearance of the application property and surrounding street scene.

It is noted that the plans indicate that the red colour treatment is in place as the applicant is in negotiations with the Post Office to bring the building in to use as a Post Office. However, no supporting information has been submitted with evidence to this effect, and there is doubt as to whether the limited floor plate of the building could accommodate the operational requirements of a Post Office. Notwithstanding, it is not apparent that there is any requirement for a Post Office in this location, nor that such facility could be accommodated in a more sensitive manner than the scheme for which planning permission is sought and no weight is afforded to this matter.

Overall therefore, the proposed development clearly fall far short of the expectations for development to be well-designed and therefore fails to accord with Policies DM1 and P3 of the adopted Core Strategy, Policy JP-P1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Amenity: DM1 and SPD

The Council's adopted Core Strategy policy DM1 states that proposals need to demonstrate that they do not adversely affect the amenity of residents or users through visual intrusion, overbearing impact, overshadowing or loss of privacy. Paragraph 5.1 of the SPD states that extensions 'should be carefully designed to protect the amenity of the occupants of adjoining properties.' Additionally, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises that planning should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

The as-built shopfront is of a setting and scale so as not to adversely affect the amenity of occupants or neighbours through overbearing impact, overshadowing or loss of privacy. It therefore accords with policies DM1, the SPD and the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE for the following reason(s):

The works undertaken to the shopfront, by reason of their bulky form, low-quality, highly incongruous finish and materiality, fail to integrate sensitively with the existing positive characteristics of the application property and surrounding area, giving rise to significant adverse impacts to the character and appearance of the surrounding street scene. The development falls far short of the expectation for development to be well-designed and therefore fails to comply with the requirements and expectations of the Shopfronts and Security Shutters Supplementary Planning Document, Policies P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-P1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Procedure Statement

The development would not improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area and therefore does not comprise sustainable development.

Notes for Applicant:

Informative

This decision relates to the following list of plans:

- As built details: 24.3372.2
- Original details: 24.3372.1
- Existing and proposed site plans: 24.3372.3
- Location plan

	Date	Officer
Report Completed	23/07/2024	Hamish Rigg
Authorisation	29/07/2024	Ryan Killeen