

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
23/00723/FUL	James Hughes	12 January 2024

Address: Land and Buildings: Pershore, Stavordale, Thetford, Lower Falinge, Cronkeyshaw, Rochdale, OL12 6RE

Proposal: Refurbishment works consisting of alterations to Thetford, Stavordale, and Pershore, including external alterations to provide a lighting scheme, provision of upgraded public realm areas, introduction of bollards, installation of new surrounds to staircases, ramps and bin store(s), removal of existing concrete upstands and installation of stainless steel and mesh railings, installation of benches and tree planting.

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?	N
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	N/A

RECOMMENDATION	GRANT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: RG

DATE: 19 January 2024

SITE

The application relates to a group of three apartment blocks to the north of Spotland Road in Rochdale. The buildings were constructed circa 1970s and consist of 'stacked maisonettes'. All three buildings are rectangular and have accommodation arranged over four storeys (ground + 3 upper floors) and similar in appearance, consisting of concrete textured external walls and hipped tiled roofs. Window frames are painted dark grey, with white painted feature surrounds.

Thetford

Thetford is sited in the west section of the application site. The long elevations of the building run in an approximate northwest-southeast direction. The building is bound by an area of public realm space to the south, beyond which is Spotland Road. Sherriff Road is adjacent to the west, with an area of surface car parking to the north and 'Stavordale' to the east. The ground floor of the building is occupied by retail/restaurant units (Planning Use Class 'E'), with residential accommodation above. One of the ground floor units occupied by a kebab restaurant projects forward of the front elevation of the main building. The associated public realm space consist of paved areas to the front of the retail units, with areas of managed lawn with small areas of planting, as well as street furniture, including benches, bicycle hoops, street lighting and bins.

Stavordale

'Stavordale' is sited to the east of 'Thetford', with long elevations of the building also running in a northwest-southeast direction. The building is bound by 'Thetford' to the west and another apartment block to the east, which does not form part of this planning application but which is sited within the red edge. To the north and south of the building are the grounds of the apartment complex, which consists of managed lawn areas and trees. 'Stavordale' has residential accommodation across all four floors.

Pershore

Pershore is the largest of the three apartment buildings that form the planning application. The building's long elevation runs in a north-south orientation, with the building running along the east edge of the red edged plan. There is a newly constructed residential development to the north of the building, with the grounds of the apartment building consisting of managed lawn and trees to the south and east. To the west is the east are other apartment buildings and an area of surface car parking.

PROPOSAL

Planning permission is sought for various alterations and additions to the apartment buildings. For clarity, all alterations are set out below. However, some of the points listed do not require planning permission.

Thetford

- Introduction of an emergency lighting scheme
- Alterations to existing bollards consisting of decoration/painting, introduction of new bollards within rear curtilage of building.
- Introduction of enclosed staircase with fob-only access to provide residents private access to a roof garden.
- Re-construction of existing retaining wall to the northwest elevation adjacent to Sherriff Street.
- Alterations to public realm including amended landscaping, planting and surfacing.
- Introduction of new staircase and bin store surround to southwest elevation of building.

Stavordale

- Alterations to metal fencing in rear curtilage of building, consisting of stripping, cleaning, priming and re-painting.
- Introduction of new staircase and bin store surround to southwest elevation of building.

Pershore

- Introduction of external benches (approx. 8) in rear curtilage (to the east of) the building.
- Alterations to communal seating area consisting of resurfacing in concrete sett paving.
- Alterations to metal fencing to front curtilage consisting of stripping, cleaning, priming and re-painting.
- Introduction of new ramp and bin store surround to south elevation of building.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (RCS):

SO1	Delivering sustainable development
DM1	General Development requirements

SO2	Creating successful and healthy communities
C2	Focusing on regeneration areas and economic growth corridors
C6	Improving health and wellbeing
SO3	Improving design, image and quality of place
P1	Improving image
P3	Improving design of new development
SO4	Promoting a Greener Environment
G6	Enhancing green infrastructure
G7	Increasing the value of biodiversity and geodiversity

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1	Defined Urban Area
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Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development (June 2016)

REGIONAL PLANNING POLICY

Places for Everyone (PfE)

	Sustainable and Resilient Places
JP-S 1	Sustainable Development
JP-S 4	Resilience
	Greener Places
JP-G 2	Green Infrastructure Network
JP-G 6	Urban Green Space
JP-G 7	Trees and Woodland
JP-G 9	A Net Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity
	Places for People
JP-P 1	Sustainable Places
	Connected Places
JP-C 5	Walking and Cycling

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – December 2023
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

RELEVANT HISTORY

- 09/D52199** Erection of replacement external staircases including demolition of connecting walkways
- 93/D30158** Environmental improvement alterations and extensions to existing flats including new walkways, stairways, ramps, refuse disposal blocks, roofs, walls, landscaping and roadways and removal of existing walkways and ramps.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Conservation Officer – 26/09/2023

Confirmed no comment.

Environmental Health – 21/09/2023

Confirmed no comment.

Greater Manchester Police

No comments received.

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service

No comments received.

Highways & Engineering – 27/09/2023

Confirmed that the majority of the proposed works are of a type or distance from adopted highway that there would be minimal impact on pedestrian or vehicle movements across the adopted network.

However, further detail is required regarding amendments to the retaining wall adjacent to Sherriff Street, which is part of the strategic highway network. As the wall is likely to provide structural support to the highway itself, it would be required that the design of any amendments would need to be approved and the applicants would need to submit drawings of the proposed amendments to the retaining wall. In addition, a Construction Method Statement (CMS) would be required for these elements to ensure any impact upon vehicular/pedestrian movements to the intersection of Sherriff Street and Spotland Road are minimised.

Stated that the areas affected by the proposed landscaping across the application site in the curtilage of the apartment buildings are unadopted highway or private land and would remain the responsibility of the applicant in terms of maintenance. In addition, current servicing arrangements appear unaffected.

In summary, as the proposal would not be expected to have impact on road safety or highways capacity, Highways & Engineering confirmed no objection subject to the submission and approval of structural details regarding the retaining wall adjacent to Sherriff Street.

Highways & Engineering II – 28/09/2023

Upon further correspondence with the applicant, Highways & Engineering confirmed that, given the scale of the alterations to the retaining wall, a structural impact assessment for approval as a planning condition would be acceptable.

MEMBER REPRESENTATIONS

None.

PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS

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Letters of notification were sent to surrounding properties and a notice was posted in the vicinity of the site. **4** letters of objection were received.

*One objection received sets out that the objection is a 'group objection' on behalf of other residents of the apartment buildings. However, it is not possible to verify that this is the case and objections must be received by individuals. As such, the group objection has been addressed as a single objection. The points raised within the objection have been carefully considered and are set out in the table below.

Objection	Officer's Response
Concerns regarding the cold temperature and dampness of flats/terraces on upper floors, which will be exacerbated by removal of concrete upstands and replacement with railings to balconies.	Assessed in 'Character and Appearance' and 'Other Matters'

Removal of concrete upstands to balconies and replacement with mesh railings will impact privacy of current residents.	Assessed in 'Occupier Amenity'
Removal/blocking off of existing rubbish chute.	Assessed in 'Other Matters'
Concerns regarding access to apartments by delivery personnel (including bulky items) if stairwell is operated by a key fob system and enclosed.	Assessed in 'Other Matters'
Concerns regarding emergency evacuation due to key fob operated stairwell.	Assessed in 'Other Matters'
Removal of railings to ground floor apartments and impact this would have on 'private garden areas' and how these areas can be used by residents.	Assessed in 'Other Matters'
Impact on residents in during the construction process including by virtue of the erection of scaffolding	Assessed in 'Occupier Amenity'
Concerns raised that residents have not been duly consulted on proposals by Rochdale Borough Housing.	Assessed in 'Other Matters'.

ANALYSIS

Principle of Development

The application relates to a group of apartment buildings close to the town centre of Rochdale, with the buildings sited within the Defined Urban Area (as designated on the saved Unitary Development Plan Proposals Map). The proposal seeks permission for a variety of additions and alterations to the existing apartment buildings and their curtilage. The majority of the proposals are minor in nature, consisting of alterations to lighting, railings, balcony surrounds, staircase/bin store surrounds and alterations to existing landscaped areas. Subject to conditions requiring further details on final materials and landscaping, the proposals would modestly improve the appearance of the apartment buildings and improve the curtilage surrounding the buildings. As such, the proposed additions and alterations proposed would represent sustainable development and be in accordance with strategic Policies SO2, SO3 and SO4 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, emerging Policy JP-S 1 of Places for Everyone and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Amended Plans – Received 17 January 2024

The applicant submitted a suite of revised plans on 17 January 2024. The plans were submitted to demonstrate some minor changes to the proposed staircase surrounds. The changes are not significant.

Design & Appearance

CS Policy DM1 requires all development proposals to be of a high quality design and take the opportunity to enhance the quality of the area. CS Policy P1 states that high quality design is expected in all new development, which helps to 'green' the urban environment and create people-friendly, safe, vibrant, uncluttered public areas. Policy P3 goes on to set out that all development, regardless of location, adheres to high standards of design. Paragraph 135 of the NPPF sets out that planning decisions should ensure that development is well designed.

The application consists of a variety of modest additions and amendments to the apartment buildings within the application site and associated curtilages. The most substantial external changes consist of the addition of surrounds to existing external staircases, bin stores and/or access ramps. The existing staircases, bin stores and access ramps are currently exposed and rather utilitarian in appearance, detracting somewhat from the simple designs of the apartment buildings. The enclosure of the areas by metal sheeting will contribute to the improvement of the overall appearance of the buildings. However, a condition will be imposed requiring full details of the materials and appearance of the enclosures proposed prior to their installation.

In addition to the above, existing concrete upstands to balconies are to be removed and replaced with new stainless steel mesh panels to match proposed new balustrades. The existing concrete upstand panels obscure apartments from view from street level, causing the buildings to look bulky and windowless at second floor level. The proposed lightweight stainless steel and mesh panels will open up the apartments and contribute to the building having a more lightweight and open appearance, which is acceptable. However, as with the proposed surrounds/enclosures, a condition will be imposed requiring full and final details of the materials to be used to balconies to be provided prior to their installation.

Various other minor changes are proposed to the apartment buildings and their curtilage. However, it is not considered that other changes require further consideration given their position and scale, with various elements included in the proposal not requiring planning permission. As such, these other additions and/or amendments to existing buildings are acceptable.

In summary, the proposal is acceptable in terms of design and appearance, consistent with Policies DM1, P1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Occupier & Neighbour Amenity

CS Policy DM1 requires all development proposals, including alterations to buildings, to be compatible with surrounding uses and consider potential impact upon those uses, impact of surrounding land uses on amenity of future residents. Development should not adversely affect the amenity of residents through visual intrusion, overbearing impact, overshadowing or loss of privacy. Paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF sets out that development should create places that provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

The majority of the proposed additions and alterations to the apartment buildings would result in no undue impact to existing and/or future occupiers of the apartment blocks, nor upon the amenity of residents of surrounding buildings. The proposed enclosures surrounding existing staircases, bin stores and access ramp would not lead to amenity impact through overshadowing, overbearing impact or visual intrusion by virtue of their scale or siting. The proposed removal of existing concrete upstands to balconies and replacement with lighter weight balcony railings would result in increased light levels reaching apartment windows, with the open aspect reducing the sense of enclosure to residents of apartment buildings with concrete balconies. It is acknowledged that the more open aspect may result in some residents feeling more exposed/visible when using their balcony spaces from passers-by below. However, the proposed balcony enclosures remain acceptable on balance with this impact not being so significant to warrant refusal of the scheme.

The proposal seeks permission for the provision of various external lights for safety and security purposes. Whilst the provision of such lighting is acceptable, it will be necessary to impose a condition requiring a suitably detailed lighting report be provided in order to ensure light overspill would not negatively impact the amenity of any residents of the apartment buildings.

On balance, with regards to occupier amenity, the proposal would not result in undue amenity impact upon the occupiers of the apartment buildings, nor those occupiers of nearby buildings. As such, the development is in accordance with Policy DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework in this regard.

Crime and Safety

CS Policy DM1 requires new development to minimise opportunities for crime against people or property, with Policy P3 going on to set out that development should incorporate design measures that design out crime. Emerging Policy JP-S 4 of PfE sets out that development should be managed to design out opportunities for crime. Emerging Policy JP-P 1 goes on to state that places should be safe, with crime designed out. Paragraph 96 of The Framework sets out that planning decisions should ensure that, inter alia, development is safe and accessible with the fear of crime reduced.

The proposed additions and alterations to the apartment buildings are not expected to result in any undue impact with regards to crime or the fear of crime. The enclosing of existing staircases and access ramps are understood to encompass the provision of fob access doors for occupiers. The residents of the apartment building will benefit from increased safety and security through this measure, with access to rooftop communal areas restricted for use only be residents. Whilst such measures and the introduction of fab access doors do not require specific planning permission, such measures are welcomed. The introduction of emergency lighting across building as proposed is also welcomed, subject to the imposition of a condition requiring a lighting report demonstrating no undue impact to the amenity of occupiers.

The proposal is acceptable with regards to crime and safety considerations, in accordance with Policies DM1 and P3 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, emerging Places for Everyone Policy JP-P 1 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Ecology & Landscaping

The application seeks permission to redevelop an area of public realm outside the ground floor retail units to the front curtilage of 'Thetford', as well as private areas of landscaping for use by the residents of the apartment buildings subject to this application (to the flat roof above retail units on Thetford as well as to the east of Pershore). CS Policy G7 requires existing public realm is protected and includes existing biodiversity, stating that development in the borough should result in a biodiversity net gain. CS Policy DM1 requires new development to incorporate high quality landscape schemes, whilst Policy P3 requires all developments, including landscaping, to adhere to high standards of design. Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that developments are visually attractive, including effective landscaping. Emerging PfE Policy JP-P 1 requires development to incorporate high quality and well managed green infrastructure and quality public realm, with high quality landscaping schemes.

The submitted plans and supporting documents demonstrate that the area of public realm is to be altered, with replacement surfacing and alterations to the layout and planting in the area, although the existing central lamp post is to be retained. In addition, areas of private external amenity space are to be

improved or altered. The area of public realm provides an important link between Sherriff Street and Spotland Road, with pedestrians from the apartment buildings that form part of the application as well as surrounding residents using the area to access the retail units to the ground floor of Thetford. As such, the area of public realm is important and should be well considered and integrated with the refurbishment works to the apartment buildings. As such, it is considered necessary and reasonable to require a planning condition requiring a detailed landscaping plan, including species of planting and how a net gain in biodiversity may be achieved. This can be demonstrated through the submission of a simple biodiversity net gain matrix, calculating the overall net gain that can be achieved. In addition, a condition will be imposed requiring the developer to provide details of biodiversity enhancements that can be implemented across the site, such as bird boxes, bat boxes etc.

Subject to condition requiring additional information, the application is acceptable and in accordance with Policies DM1, G3 and P7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, emerging Policy JP-P 1 of Places for Everyone as well as the National Planning Policy Framework.

Highways

As part of the application, an existing retaining wall to the east side of Sherriff Street, adjacent to 'Thetford' block, is to be re-built. Paragraph 114 of the NPPF states that it should be ensured that development does not lead to significant issues on highway safety. Paragraph 115 goes on to state that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be unacceptable impact on highway safety.

As part of the assessment of this application, the Council's Highways & Engineering (H&E) team were consulted. The response received confirmed no objection, subject to a condition requiring a structural impact assessment for approval by the Local Planning Authority in collaboration with H&E. The H&E team confirmed that there was no objection or any additional comments to be made on any other element of the proposal.

Subject to the imposition of the planning condition as requested, the proposal is acceptable and consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework, with no undue impact expected on highway safety.

Other Matters

Following due consultation with local neighbours and the display of site notices, neighbour representations were received. Those representations that raised material planning considerations have been addressed in previous sections. For completeness, additional representations that have not been considered are set out below.

Cold Temperatures/Dampness

It is not expected that alterations to balconies will result in direct impact to the residents through a change in temperature or contribution to dampness in the internal demise of their apartments. Residents of the buildings as part of this application should report any issues of this kind to the housing association for investigation.

Blocking off of rubbish chute

Alterations to internal waste management, including the provision of bin chutes, cannot be controlled by the planning process as this does not constitute development.

Access by delivery personnel.

Notwithstanding that this does not form a planning matter, it is understood that a fob access and intercom system is proposed that will allow delivery personnel to contact occupiers of the apartments to inform them of deliveries.

Emergency evacuation routes

The evacuation procedures are to be agreed separately and does not in itself form a material planning consideration. The applicant must ensure that evacuation procedures are updated and compliant with up to date fire safety regulations.

Removal of railings to ground floor garden areas

The applicant has confirmed that there is no intention to permanently remove railings from ground floor garden areas and this does not form part of this planning application. Railings are to be refurbished in situ or removed temporarily and put back in place, with this not requiring planning permission.

Lack of consultation with Rochdale Borough Housing

This does not form a material planning consideration and should be addressed directly with Rochdale Borough Housing.

Conclusion

The application seeks permission for various small scale additions and alterations to the apartment buildings and surrounding curtilage. It is considered that the alterations would have a modest improvement on the overall appearance of the existing buildings, with the improvements to public

and private amenity space acceptable subject to a condition requiring full details of landscaping and ecology improvements. In addition, subject to condition, no element of the proposal would lead to undue impact on highway safety. The alterations proposed to balconies may result in some perceived increase in overlooking of residents when utilising their balconies. However, this impact would not be so significant to warrant refusal of the application and the improvements would result in an improved visual appearance of the buildings.

As such, the proposal represents sustainable development and is consistent with local and national policy considerations, as well as emerging policies that form the city region development plan. As such, the application should be approved without delay.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Planning and Licensing Committee resolves to **GRANT planning permission** 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 and documents:-
 - Location Plan (Drawing 100 dated 30 June 2023)
 - Proposed Site Plan (Drawing 106 Revision 2 dated 30 June 2023)
 - Proposed Removal Works Plan (Drawing 102 dated 30 June 2023)
 - Proposed Elevations – Thetford (Drawing 107 Revision 1 dated 30 June 2023)
 - Proposed Elevations – Stavordale (Drawing 108 Revision 2 dated 30 June 2023)
 - Proposed Elevations – Pershore (Drawing 109 Revision 1 dated 30 June 2023)
 - Proposed Roof Garden Section (Drawing 110 dated 30 June 2023)
 - Staircase Surround Details – Thetford (Drawing 114 Revision 2 dated 30 June 2023).
 - Staircase Surround Details - Pershore (Drawing 115 Revision 1 dated 23 November 2022)

- Staircase Surround & Bin Store Details – Stavordale (Drawing 117 Revision 3 dated 23 November 2022)
- Construction Management Plan ('Construction Phase Plan (HS01)' dated 21 August 2023)

And the development shall be carried out in 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 Core Strategy, the saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. Prior to commencement of works to the existing retaining wall to the east of Sherriff Street, the applicant shall submit a suitably detailed Structural Impact Assessment for approval by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Council's Highways & Engineering department. Works to the retaining wall shall thereafter be completed in full accordance with the approved assessment.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed works do not result in undue impact upon highway safety, including upon pedestrian movements in accordance with the policies contained within the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

4. Notwithstanding any description of materials in the application no works to balconies or staircase/refuse/ramp surrounds shall take place until samples and/or full specification of materials to be used externally on the buildings have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such details shall include the type, colour and texture of the materials. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the development.

Reason: In order to ensure a satisfactory appearance in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies P2, P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

5. No works to the existing public realm area to the front curtilage of Thetford, roof top gardens to Thetford, or private amenity space to the east of Pershore shall take place until a scheme of biodiversity enhancements for the site including, but not limited to, the provision of

bird boxes, bird bricks, bat boxes and bat bricks to be integrated to the fabric of the buildings hereby approved, bug hotels, hibernaculum, wildflower seeding has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The duly approved scheme shall be implemented in full prior to first occupation of the dwellings and retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of enhancing biodiversity and habitat provision within the site in accordance with Policy G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

6. (a) No works to the existing public realm area to the front curtilage of Thetford, roof top gardens to Thetford, or private amenity space to the east of Pershore shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscaping works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall include the formation of any banks, terraces or other earthworks, hard surfaced areas and materials, planting plans, specifications and schedules (including planting size, species and numbers / densities), existing plants / trees to be retained and a scheme for the timing / phasing of implementation works.

(b) The landscaping works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme for timing / phasing of implementation or within the next planting season following final occupation of the development hereby permitted, whichever is the sooner.

(c) Any trees or shrubs planted or retained in accordance with this condition which are removed, uprooted, destroyed, die or become severely damaged or become seriously diseased within 5 years of planting shall be replaced within the next planting season by trees or shrubs of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.

Reason: To ensure that the site is satisfactorily landscaped having regard to its location and the nature of the proposed development and in accordance with policies P3, DM1 and G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

7. No external lighting shall be installed on the building or elsewhere on the site unless a scheme for such lighting has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall thereafter be fully implemented.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and the conservation of protected species and in compliance with Policies P3, G9, DM1 and G7 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework

8. The development shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved Construction Management Plan as set out in Condition 2 'Approved Plans and Documents'.

Reason: To minimise detrimental effects to the amenity of surrounding residential occupiers and dangers to highway safety during the construction phase in accordance with Policies DM1, T2, and G9 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.