

APPLICATION NUMBER: 24/00883/FUL

DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER
24/00883/FUL	Anna Hayes

DETERMINATION DATE 28.11.2024 **EXT OF TIME** 15.01.2025

Address: 85A-89 Albany Hotel Rochdale Road East Heywood Rochdale OL10 1PX

Proposal: Change of use of ground floor from Bar/Function Room to create additional Hotel rooms and communal space

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?	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	Grant subject to conditions
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: LA

DATE: 14.01.25

SITE

The application relates to the Albany Hotel on Rochdale Road East in Heywood and comprises of a two storey detached building. The current lawful use of the property is a public house with hotel accommodation above. There is an area of raised decking to the front which is used for outdoor seating. The plot also benefits from a private car park for guests of the pub/hotel to the front and western side. To the rear of the building there is a single storey flat roof extension and a service yard for bin storage etc.

An Aldi food store is located some 130m west along Rochdale Road East, otherwise the surrounding area is predominately residential. There are terraced properties which share a common boundary along the rear of the site (to the north) on Promenade Street and are situated at a noticeably lower ground level.

The site is located within the defined urban area and a designated physical regeneration area according to the UDP Proposals Map.

PROPOSAL

As originally submitted, planning permission was sought for the change of use of ground floor from Bar/Function Room to create additional Hotel rooms and communal space (use class C1), as well a single storey rear extension. However during the course of the application, the single storey rear extension was removed from the development proposals owing to amenity concerns.

The application now seeks planning permission for the change of use of the whole property to a Hotel (C1) with a total of 16 hotel rooms, served on either a bed and breakfast or room only basis. The ground floor includes a café area where breakfast will be served for guests and during the day it will be open to both guests and the public. Opening times are to be from 7am – 10pm. The café area noted on the ground floor plans is mainly a storage, preparation and sales area so the counter would be fitted with appliances such as a small fridge, Panini press, coffee machine etc.

The ground floor would accommodate 10 new en-suite hotel rooms and a communal lounge area. A window is to be reinstated to the western elevation to room 2 at ground floor level and the external staircase replaced. At first floor level there would be 6 en-suite hotel rooms as existing.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Section 2 Achieving sustainable development

Section 8 Promoting healthy and safe communities

Section 9 Promoting sustainable transport

Section 11 Making effective use of land

Section 12 Achieving well-designed places

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Development Plan

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making.

The development plan for the proposal consists of the Places for Everyone (PfE) Joint Development Plan, Rochdale Core Strategy (CS), adopted 2016, and saved Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies. The Council also has an adopted series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Supplementary Guidance Notes, which are other material considerations.

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan (PfE) (2024)

Sustainable and Resilient Places

JP-S1 Sustainable Development
JP-S4 Flood Risk and the Water Environment
JP-S5 Clean Air

Places for Jobs

JP-J1 Supporting Long-Term Economic Growth

Places for People

JP-P1 Sustainable Places

Connected Places

JP-C6 Walking and Cycling
JP-C8 Transport Requirements of New Development

Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy (CS):

- C1 Delivering the right amount of housing in the right places
- C2 Focus on regeneration areas and economic growth corridors
- C3 Delivering the right type of housing

- E1 Establishing thriving town, district and local centres
- E2 Increasing jobs and prosperity
- E3 Focusing on economic growth corridors and areas

- SD1 Delivering sustainable development
- P3 Improving design of new development
- G9 Reducing the impact of pollution
- T2 Improving accessibility
- DM1 General Development requirements

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):

G/D/1 Defined Urban Area
G/R/1 Physical Regeneration

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

Supplementary Planning Guidance note 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' (June 2016).

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

06/D47482 - Construction of Fire Escape Steps to Front And Side, And Decking To Front Of Hotel (Part Retrospective) – Approved 24.07.2006

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways and Engineering

Confirms no objection to the proposal.

Env Health - Noise/Odours

Confirms no objection to the proposal.

Lead Local Flood Authority/Drainage

No drainage details have been provided. On the basis that no new hardstanding is proposed and with the single storey rear extension being removed from the proposal, there is no further comment from the LLFA.

Environmental Control (Landfill Gas)

No comments received to date

REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been publicised with neighbour notification letters, in addition to a site notice. 30 letters of representation have been received in respect of this application, including 16 letters of support, 13 letters of objection and 1 neutral letter neither objecting to nor supporting the application. The comments received are summarised below:

Object

Amenity

- Detrimental impact on surrounding community;
- Proposed rear extension would increase the building's footprint and exacerbate existing issues of privacy and disturbance contrary to policy H/11;
- Single storey rear extension would overlook private gardens leading to an unacceptable loss of privacy;
- Noise disturbance;

Traffic and Parking

- The increase in rooms and communal space will likely lead to a significant increase in vehicle traffic and parking demand;
- The existing parking situation is already strained, with frequent issues of congestion, illegal parking and dangerous driving conditions on surrounding streets;
- Further intensification will not meet the sustainable transport objectives outlined in Policy A/9.

Proposed Use

- Doubt over the proposed use as a Hotel. The building is currently use for supported accommodation. Proposed change of use is an extension of this existing arrangement;
- These are not hotel rooms for tourists to visit the area and contribute to the economy of Heywood;
- Location is unsuitable for hotel use in a residential area;
- Profit driven scheme, not community focused;
- Lack of community benefit;
- Concerns for increased safety issues;
- Concerns given close proximity to a local primary school;
- The current occupiers appear to be longer stay residents;
- Floor plans have misinformation and rooms not representative of a hotel;
- Appears to be a hostel or refuge not a hotel.

Other

- Impact on house prices;
- New build accommodation is already in the process across the road so why the need for more type of this accommodation.

Support

- Much better to have more rooms than an empty building;
- Great to see the hotel being used again;
- Will hopefully bring job opportunities for school leavers;

- After years of living with the noise and antisocial behaviour from the previous use of this property as a bar, welcome the change to hotel rooms;
- The more use we can make of closed places the better it is for our businesses in Rochdale/ Heywood
- Fantastic idea
- Don't like to see an empty building;
- We need more accommodation.

Neutral (neither supporting nor objecting)

- Have lived in the Albany before it is a good and safe place to be
- Extra rooms would be great for people in need, rather than it be empty and close

Officer notes:

- Loss of property value is not a material planning consideration;
- The speculation over the proposed use is noted however the application seeks planning permission for the use of the property as a Hotel (Class C1) and is to be assessed as such;
- Owing to concerns relating to amenity, the proposed single storey rear extension has been removed from the proposal.

ANALYSIS

Principle of Development

The application site is located within the Defined Urban Area as designated under the Proposals Map of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). UDP Policy G/D/1 states that the Council will encourage new development, wherever possible and appropriate, to be concentrated within the urban area in order to support urban regeneration and to protect the countryside.

Firstly, consideration needs to be given to the loss of the Public House. Changes to the Use Classes Order have seen pubs (previously Class A4) now identified as a Sui Generis use, which requires planning permission in its own right. This is aligned to Government's narrative of protecting community facilities as identified within paragraph 98 of the NPPF, which states that decisions should 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.

Public Houses are unique uses and the associated loss of community use and culture is regrettable, however the existing hotel rooms have found success through the listing of the building as a Place to Stay through the Local Authorities Visit Rochdale web page. It is recognised that the current use is not proving to be a viable business with proved lack of demand and so the expansion of the hotel facility seems logical. It therefore cannot be demonstrated that the local community's needs would be prejudiced through the resulting loss of the premises, as it is also noted that two other public houses are situated within around 300m of the application site - namely the Engineers Arms and The White Lion.

In turning to the proposed expanded hotel use, it is noted that the provision of a good supply of land and premises for employment uses, suitable for all types of businesses in accessible locations, is also essential if we are to ensure the creation of more and better jobs and increase prosperity in the borough. To achieve this, amongst other things, CS policy E2 aims to support new employment development and maintain existing levels of employment land and where possible improve the number, range and quality of jobs. CS policy E2(d) also seeks to focus on promoting development and facilities that support the visitor and local economy. Expanding on this, CS policy E5 also promotes the visitor economy and in the process, supports

the provision of built leisure, tourism, cultural facilities and overnight accommodation subject to the following sequential approach:

- i. Town centres if sites are available; or
- ii. Areas where a need can be demonstrated (i.e. for business visitors and / or close to tourism attractions) in support of the tourism opportunity areas listed above and economic growth corridors / areas (Policy E3).

In particular, paragraph 7.57 of the CS notes that whilst the visitor sector already contributes significantly to the local economy, it is recognised that there is still great potential for growth. Greater Manchester has been identified as having a key role to play in the development of the visitor economy in the North West. The borough should be promoted as a gateway between the cultural and leisure attractions of central Manchester and the outdoor moorland, reservoir and industrial heritage based tourism and recreation of the South Pennines.

Noting that the Albany Hotel already provides hotel accommodation, the proposed hotel use would not be new and so the expansion and redevelopment of the existing site to provide additional rooms, which would align sympathetically within the existing prevalent residential character of the locality, would allow for the sustainable continued use of a currently underused building/facility and support economic growth. The expanded hotel facility would strengthen the existing business, and increase the likelihood of its success, by providing further space and rooms which could be utilised by possible customers.

To conclude, whilst CS Policy E5 has a 'town centre first' approach to providing hotel accommodation, since the existing building already provides overnight accommodation it would be unreasonable to require this to be relocated. Overall, it is found that the development is acceptable in principle and would be an efficient use of land, subject to all other material considerations being satisfied, as discussed in the report below.

Visual Amenity

Policies DM1 and P3 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy requires development proposals to adhere to high quality design and enhance the borough's identity and sense of place, 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.

Following the removal of the single storey rear extension from the plans, the proposal only relates to the change of use with minor external alterations including a new window and external steps. Subject to the use of matching materials to the existing, the proposed amendments would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the existing building and street scene.

As such, the application would therefore have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding street scene and would accord with policies DM1 and P3 of the Core Strategy and policy in the NPPF.

Residential Amenity

Policy DM1 of the Core Strategy requires that proposals should not adversely affect the amenity of residents or users through visual intrusion, overbearing impact, overshadowing or loss of privacy. The National Planning Policy Framework requires development to achieve a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

The “Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development” SPD contains a number of guidance parameters for the design and layout of new housing in order to preserve the amenity standards for surrounding residents and future occupiers.

The Albany Hotel is surrounded by existing residential properties. The neighbour objections are noted and primarily relate to the original plans which included the proposed single storey rear extension. Due to the changing ground levels and proximity of the extension to the rear boundary, the proposed development would have resulted in a poor quality of outlook for the occupiers of the residential properties on Promenade Street and would have had an unacceptable overbearing impact. At the request of Officers, amended plans were received subsequently removing the proposed extension from the plans.

For the following reasons the revised proposal is found to be acceptable and would not give rise to a detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties by way of loss of outlook, privacy or sunlight/daylight, noise and disturbance:

- Separation distances between windows are to be retained as existing.
- There is no change of use at first floor level or introduction of any new habitable room windows/ hotel rooms which would alter the existing arrangement, particularly to those properties on Promenade Street to the north;
- The new window to Room 2 at ground floor level would be located beneath the existing external staircase (to be replaced). The outlook from this window would be upon the side gable of the adjacent properties 85a and 85b Rochdale Road East and along this boundary there is a close boarded panel fence rising to 1.8m/2m in height above ground level – providing an effective barrier between windows. As such there would be no loss of privacy for neighbouring occupiers from this ground floor window as a result of direct overlooking;
- The external staircase is existing and its replacement would result in no changes to the existing relationship between this site and adjoining land/buildings.

The proposed car parking arrangements do not significantly differ from the existing site layout and so Officers are satisfied that the proposed car parking layout would not result in undue noise and disturbance.

The Council’s Environmental Health department have been consulted on the proposal and offer no objection. It is noted that previous complaints were associated with the licensed premises and loud music - the proposed change of use would likely eradicate these issues.

Overall, the proposal raises no significant residential amenity concerns and is therefore found to be acceptable in this regard.

Highways

With any application for new development it is important to assess the impact on highway safety and under policy T2 of the adopted Core Strategy it is established that ‘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’. Whilst Paragraph 116 of the NPPF 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, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios’.

The existing site has an existing car park and it is proposed to create 12 car parking spaces with defined lines following minor amendments to the site layout.

The LHA have provided no comment on the application but given the existing building /use have established servicing arrangements, it is not considered that the proposed development would give rise to any issue in this regard.

For these reasons, it is considered that the proposed development have an acceptable impact on highways safety and congestion, in compliance with policy T2 of the Adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, as well as the NPPF.

Drainage

Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, but where development is necessary, making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Policy G8 of the Core Strategy sets out the Council's strategy for managing water resources and flood risk more effectively in the interests of public safety, protecting property and infrastructure and the conservation of the natural environment.

Initial concerns have been raised by the Council's Drainage Engineer regarding the limited details provided. However, it is noted that the parking areas is already surfaced and the proposal relates to the reconfiguration of parking spaces within these areas. On this basis the LLFA have no further comment.

On this basis, it is considered that the proposed development would not result in any increased surface water run-off and would comply with Policy G8 of the Councils Core Strategy, as well as the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant subject to conditions

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. The permission relates to the following plans:-

Site Location Plan Scale 1:1250

Drawing 24.3392.SC3.3E – Existing and Proposed Block Plans

Drawing 24.3392.SC3.5 – Proposed Basement Plan

Drawing 24.3392.SC3.1D – Proposed Ground Floor Plan

Drawing 24.3392.SC3.4 – Proposed First Floor Plan

Drawing 24.3392.SC3.2A – Proposed Elevations

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 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. The number of bedrooms in the hotel hereby approved shall not exceed sixteen.

Reason: To prevent future uncontrolled intensification of the use in order to protect the amenities of existing residents in accordance with policies DM1 and G9 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

4. The car parking, servicing and other vehicular access arrangements shown on the approved plans to serve the development hereby permitted shall be made fully available for use prior to the development being first brought into use and shall be retained thereafter for their intended purpose.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety and the free flow of traffic and in accordance with Policies T2 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-C8 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

5. The materials used in the construction of the exterior of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the construction of the exterior of the existing building in colour, form, type, size and texture.

Reason: In the interests of ensuring a satisfactory visual appearance to the development and in accordance with Policies P3 and DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, Policy JP-P1 of the adopted Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

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:

Report Author Anna Hayes